



19 September 2016

Reference: DWS
Contact person: David Morrison

Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir

**New Grafton Correctional Centre – Environmental Impact Statement
SSD 7413 – Concept proposal and Stage 1 Early Works**

Attention : Director, Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above mentioned Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Council's broader comment and recommendations for mitigation measures are contained in the following, and more detailed comment from Council's technical staff are included as Attachments to this letter.

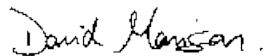
The need for the facility and the broader and more diverse economic benefits that will accrue to the local area is acknowledged, subject to infrastructure and social impacts being adequately managed and mitigated at no cost to Council. More specifically :

1. Economic (positive) and social (negative) impacts are understated partly due to the methodology used to consider such impacts on a regional basis. This assumes that impacts are spread evenly across the region whereas it is Council's view that the impacts are not distributed evenly but focussed very much so on the Clarence Valley. Hence, many of the EIS's conclusions that follow are questioned.
2. The conclusion (page 66 of the EIS) that the "*negative externalities (impacts with socialised benefits or costs such as additional traffic or concerns about safety and security) are not likely to be of a scale that will exceed the modelled economic benefits of the project*" does not abrogate the responsibility of the project to mitigate impacts on those sections of the community the "negative externalities" most affect.
3. Appendix K (at page 34) recognises the likely need for additional funding needs for community services. However, it is not clear on the responsibility for such funding but implies that it will be managed by various community and government organisations. Council's view is that this is a direct consequence of the project and hence should be fully funded by the project.
4. The project requires on-going commitment to monitoring its impacts and providing for on-going programs to mitigate impacts during and construction and operational phases including funding for :

- a. Two FTE social workers to assist managing social impacts
- b. Destination marketing to address adverse tourism image and impact
- 5. There is concern regarding the adequacy of the effluent management assessment and whether it has been adequately demonstrated to be achievable on the site
- 6. There is concern that the wider traffic impacts are understated and the assessment has not adequately addressed the amount of traffic, especially deliveries/supply, nor the impact on the wider local road network. The road upgrading recommendations in the EIS, especially for Avenue Road south of the site, are considered inadequate.
- 7. The determining authority will need to be satisfied that the EIS meets the requirements of clause 7.8 of the Clarence Valley Local Environmental Plan 2011, in regard to effluent management and traffic infrastructure requirements.
- 8. All infrastructure requirements to be fully funded by the project, including suitable arrangements for on-going maintenance, at no cost to Council. This includes charges applicable under adopted Section 94 and 64 Plans.

Council staff will be willing to discuss or clarify any of the issues raised in this submission as may be required. Please don't hesitate to contact me on 66 430 204 in this regard.

Yours faithfully



David Morrison
Manager Strategic & Economic Planning

ATTACHMENT 1 – DETAILED COMMENTS

Infrastructure Management (Section 10)

1. Section 10.1.3, p70, last paragraph – any offsite (i.e. third party) options would trigger the requirement for a licence under the *Water Industry Competition Act*. IPART would then become the approval authority for operation of the correctional facility's on-site system. As the EIS has not considered licencing under the WIC Act, either the EIS should consider this legislative requirement or prohibit off-site options.
2. Section 10.1.4, p70 – a particular issue for top-up of "non-potable" roof water supplies – there is the possibility of cross-connection between the potable supply and the non-potable supply. As this section suggests roof water would be used for "all other uses", it implies that this would include cooking, showering etc and therefore cross connection is a real possibility that would need to be considered.
3. Section 10.1.5, p70 and 71 – this section does not clarify responsibility for ownership and on-going management of the minimum water supply infrastructure. Council's position is that the correctional centre is to be the owner, operator and maintainer of any such infrastructure.
4. Appendix D Part 1, Water Cycle Management Working Paper – it is unclear from the modelling as to what the rainwater harvesting substitution will replace (see comment on Section 10.1.4)
5. Appendix D Part 2, Water Supply Working Paper - there is no mention in this paper of the proposed rainwater harvesting to reduce potable demand. How the rainwater harvesting would interface with the reservoir is unclear.
6. Appendix D Part 2, Wastewater Servicing Working Paper, Section 2,3, 2nd para – the figures quoted are for scenario 1; scenario 2 has a peak wastewater flow which meets the threshold
7. Appendix D Part 2, Wastewater Servicing Working Paper, Section 4.1 – third dot point - to achieve the log removals required in the AGWR for on-site non-potable reuse it is likely that additional treatment such as ultrafiltration would be required
8. Appendix D Part 2, Wastewater Servicing Working Paper, Section 4.1 – third dot point – any discharge on the Clarence Valley Regional Airport (as an external property) would require the scheme to be licenced under the *Water Industry Competition Act* (in addition to an Environment Protection Licence from the EPA). IPART requires licencees to meet the AGWR and hence the EPA 2004 Effluent Irrigation Guidelines cited in Section 3.3. would not be the appropriate guidelines. There has not been any discussion with Council, as owner, about discharge on the Grafton airport and at this stage, this option is not supported.
9. Appendix D Part 2, Wastewater Servicing Working Paper, Section 4.2.5 – using evaporation data from Inverell will not give a valid answer to the irrigation modelling as Inverell is climactically different to Grafton. Using such data from Inverell will overstate the evaporation. More appropriate data is from the Coffs Harbour Meteorological Officer (first choice) or

Alstonville (second choice). Daily evaporation data should have been used in the modelling as daily evaporation can be influenced by daily rainfall. The results shown in Figure 4.2 are therefore considered invalid and cannot be supported.

10. Appendix D Part 2, Wastewater Servicing Working Paper, Section 4.4.4 – last para– any irrigation off site (as external properties) would require the scheme to be licenced under the *Water Industry Competition Act* (in addition to an Environment Protection Licence from the EPA).
11. In broad terms, the EIS is based on on-site effluent management. Council is of the view that the information submitted in the EIS does not sufficiently demonstrate that this option is feasible and hence, should be subject of further assessment before approval is granted.

Flooding (Section 17)

12. Section 17.3, para 3, 1st dot point – the *Clarence River Flood Study 2013* considers a flood event affecting the whole Clarence catchment and does not consider localised flood events. Unless a specific flood study of the local area is undertaken the statements in this dot point that the site “has no risk of flooding” and “there is no risk-to-life from flooding” cannot be supported with evidence (noting that a flood study of the local area may come to the same conclusion).

Traffic (Section 15)

13. There is inconsistency in the report between information in section 15 and Appendix D in relation to predicted traffic generation. Section 15 predicts construction traffic to be with 20 vehicles per day (vpd) to approximately 1,000 vpd at construction peak. Appendix D has 20 vpd at construction commencement to volumes “likely to increase significantly” during Stage 2 works. For Operational traffic section 15 nominates approximately 600 staff split into 2 or three shifts while Appendix D has 1600 vpd (two-way) with a peak of approximately 250 vehicles entering/exiting the site between 2 pm and 3 pm each day.
14. The traffic assessment recommends the upgrade of Avenue Road from the correctional centre to Eight Mile Lane in some form (passing bays or widening) and upgrade of Avenue Road and Eight Mile Lane intersection. As noted in the report these upgrades will need to be carried in coordination with the Pacific Highway upgrade works, which also plan to widen this section of Avenue Road and the Avenue Road/Eight Mile Lane intersection. Council is of the view that upgrading and widening of Avenue Road to full two lane width in accordance with NRDC standards is essential. Council will not support a lesser option (such as passing bays).
15. The report is silent about potential traffic impacts on Avenue Road north of the site as well as Six Mile Lane/Old Six Mile Lane (which runs adjacent to the correctional centre site back to the highway). There is a likelihood on increased traffic on Avenue Road north of the site in particular with the potential requirement for road upgrade to accommodate increased traffic.
16. The operational traffic impact assessment (Appendix D, Section 5.2, p21) seems to assume that delivery and inmate transportation as approximately 5 vehicles arriving per day. Assuming that this includes all the supply

logistics (eg food, laundry etc) as well as inmate transportation for a 1,700 person facility, this seems to be questionable and extremely low,

Biodiversity (Section 12)

17. The impacts for loss of remnant native vegetation and associated impacts on identified threatened species should be secured locally. Where there are not sufficient local credits in the State's Offsets system for major developments appropriate offsets should be secured within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development on a like for like basis consistent with Clarence Valley Councils Biodiversity Strategy and OEH's Offsets requirements. Further certainty on the extent of clearing to achieve the appropriate bush fire protection including need for fire trails around the perimeter of the site shall be determined and included in the assessment of impacts and also incorporated into the Biodiversity offsets.

Economic (Section 9)

18. It is noted that the EIS has adopted an "economic impact assessment" approach rather than an input output modelling approach (Appendix K). The rationale for the preferred approach has not been made clear. Council has it's own input output model (Lawrence Consulting) and the Gaol employment data has been used as the key input. The results from Council's modelling is somewhat different – being a nett increase in employment (Clarence Valley) of about 1,078, as against the EIS's assessment of 105 across the region.
19. Following on from point 18, the economic analysis assumes the spatial boundaries of the analysis as being the North Coast Region. Hence it inherently assumes that in terms of overall impact, the impacts are distributed evenly across the region. Council is of the view that the impacts are not evenly distributed but will be heavily focussed in the Clarence Valley. The EIS should address these local impacts which in terms of economic impacts, are accepted as being positive by degree varying according to the methodology used (point 18).
20. Similarly, the region adopted by the EIS is from the Clarence valley north to the Queensland border. It therefore ignores the Coffs harbour LGA immediately to the south which, after the completion of the Highway, will be significantly closer to the facility than most of the region that has been used for the assessment.
21. A summary of the output from Council's model is included at Attachment 2 to this letter for your information. Council would be more than happy to provide additional detail from the model's output.
22. However, as indicated by Appendix K, the economic analysis forms the basis for identifying social impacts. Hence, by taking an approach that effectively distributes the impact across a wide region, it under-estimates local impacts. These are discussed further in Council's comments on the social impacts.
23. Clarence Valley Council currently benchmarks a number of socio-economic indicators for the CV for the purpose of evaluating the cumulative impacts of a range of infrastructure projects currently underway in the Clarence Valley. As the Gaol will have a significant impact, it is recommended that the project contribute towards continued this monitoring beyond the five year infrastructure period of measure the ongoing impact of the Correctional

Centre on the community. This information could be made available to the NSW Govt to inform future funding and resourcing assistance to the Clarence Valley (Council).

24. Impact on Tourism is considered to be very much understated in the EIS. Given the variation in size from the existing Grafton Goal to the New Correctional Centre, there is considerable doubt around the comparisons of community acceptance and impact. To assume the impact will be minimal and the community are excepting as "the community already has a Goal" is presumptuous. The new Correctional Centre is seven times larger (1700 inmates vs 280 inmates) than the existing Goal and therefore the impacts much greater. The existing Gaol has a long history and is located within the town's urban fabric. The new facility will be seven times larger and located in a very visually prominent site adjacent to the new Highway. Hence, it will potentially have a significant impact on how travelling public perceive the area. The impacts on tourism and investment for Grafton could be significant. Again comparisons to the fact there is a current prison are not balanced or holistic. The current Gaol is minimalist, not imposing and has a historic facia, it therefore has minimum impact to the community and not certainly not visible to potential visitors or investors. The new Correctional Centre will be located right on the highway and extremely visible as you pass by Grafton. Therefore this could leave a lasting impression on the passer-by that Grafton is a 'Prison Town', uninviting and unsafe. This first impression will be difficult to dissipate. Screening of the site is probably not feasible. Hence, Council's view is that the project should contribute towards a destination marketing program to mitigate these anticipated impacts.
25. Council requests that project contracts should include a mandate for local procurement/employment at construction and operational phases in order to enhance local economic benefit opportunities.

Social (Section 9)

26. Referencing points 18 and 19 above, the EIS should acknowledge the existing very low housing vacancy rates in the local area - less than 1%. Hence, there is virtually no latent capacity in the housing supply in the short term to accommodate short term housing impacts of the proposal. This has not been addressed in the EIS and is likely, when considered in cumulative terms with other infrastructure programs, result in housing market imbalances and housing stress. Such a situation is likely to be manifest in other social impacts.
27. Potential concerns with the project include the following:
- Increased population numbers in the region with limited educational, medical and social services to support them i.e. no doctors in the Clarence Valley are taking new patients and one service has closed altogether last month due to lack of doctors to work in the area.
 - Increased numbers of inmates families moving to the area. The EIA states that this is not normally the case however Council's social workers experience tells is different. With 1700 beds if only 5% of families moved to the Valley that would equal 85 families requiring education, medical and support services as well as accommodation. We do not have availability in any of these areas presently to accommodate this influx.

- c. The social assessment seems to rely heavily on the Lithgow experience. Council is not convinced that this is necessarily valid.
- d. Inmates relocating to the area after release. When speaking to a representative of the Correctional Centre recently they stated that inmates would be housed in Grafton who were from the region. Based on this statement there is every likelihood that some will stay in the area upon release. There is a no capacity to accommodate this likelihood.
- e. Increased demand on Social and Welfare services. This is a given need across all areas which each infrastructure change in the region. Local services are stretched to the limit and the region has been experiencing disturbing social issues around suicides over many months and struggling to gain government support to locate a 'Headspace' and PCYC' into the Grafton area.

28. Clarence Valley Council Social and Cultural Section recommend the following as a positive way to address the issues raised in this response to the New Grafton Correctional Centre SSDA 7413 Section 9 Social and Economic Impacts :

- a. That the Department fund two FTE Social Welfare positions to sit within CVC Social and Cultural Section to undertake capacity building work within the Social Services, Housing, Educational and Medical sectors to meet the increasing needs for their services over the course of the build and ongoing during the life of the Correctional Centre. It is recognised that the same needs won't be critical in the community in five years with the completion of the gaol as will be present in the build or 15 years from now when the face of the community has changed again. It is however important to build the capacity of our service providers and to entice new services to the valley for each change cycle. It is envisaged that the Social Workers could build partnerships between the Department and our Grafton Library service and Grafton Regional Gallery to name a few.

ATTACHMENT 2 – SUMMARY - LOCAL IMPACT MODELLING (Lawrence Consulting)



Correctional Centre operation

Summary of Impacts

	Region			
	Clarence Valley	Mid North Coast	New South Wales	Australia
Total Impact:				
Output (\$ million)				
Direct	93.2	93.2	93.2	93.2
Indirect	41.2	41.2	50.0	59.6
Consumption	62.5	71.8	126.2	133.0
Total	196.9	206.2	269.4	285.8
Income (\$ million)				
Direct	31.6	31.6	31.6	31.6
Indirect	9.2	9.4	13.0	15.8
Consumption	16.6	36.0	53.5	55.1
Total	57.4	77.0	98.0	102.5
Employment (fte persons)				
Direct	600.0	600.0	600.0	600.0
Indirect	140.6	143.0	171.2	200.8
Consumption	338.2	713.0	853.3	870.4
Total	1,078.7	1,456.0	1,624.5	1,671.3
Value added (\$ million)				
Direct	56.4	56.4	56.4	56.4
Indirect	20.6	21.2	26.4	30.8
Consumption	32.8	69.7	96.1	113.4
Total	109.9	147.3	178.9	200.6
Economic Indicators:				
Gross regional product, 2014/15 (\$ million)	2,342.6	14,453.7	513,309.0	1,609,992.0
% change in baseline GRP	4.69%	1.02%	0.03%	0.01%
Total regional employment, 2014/15 (fte persons)	21,299	129,915	3,623,735	11,558,489
% change in baseline regional employment	5.06%	1.12%	0.04%	0.01%