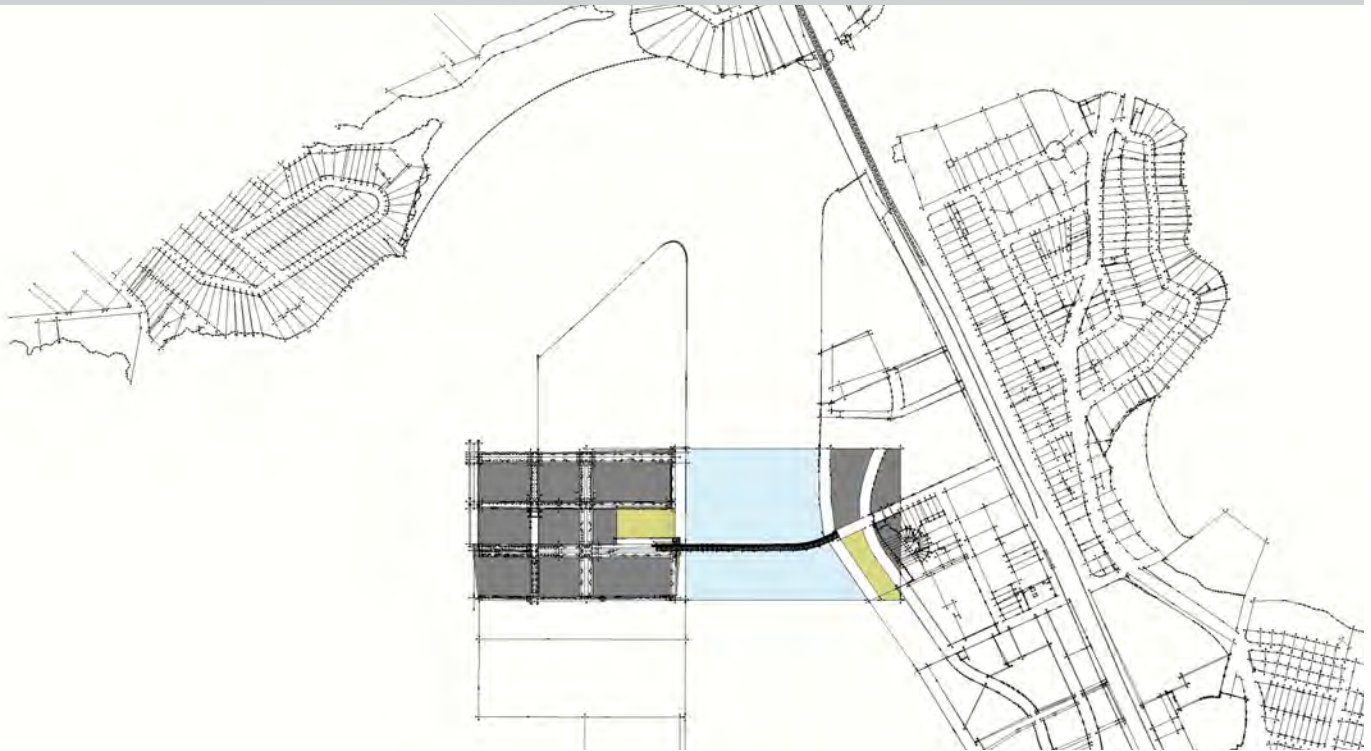
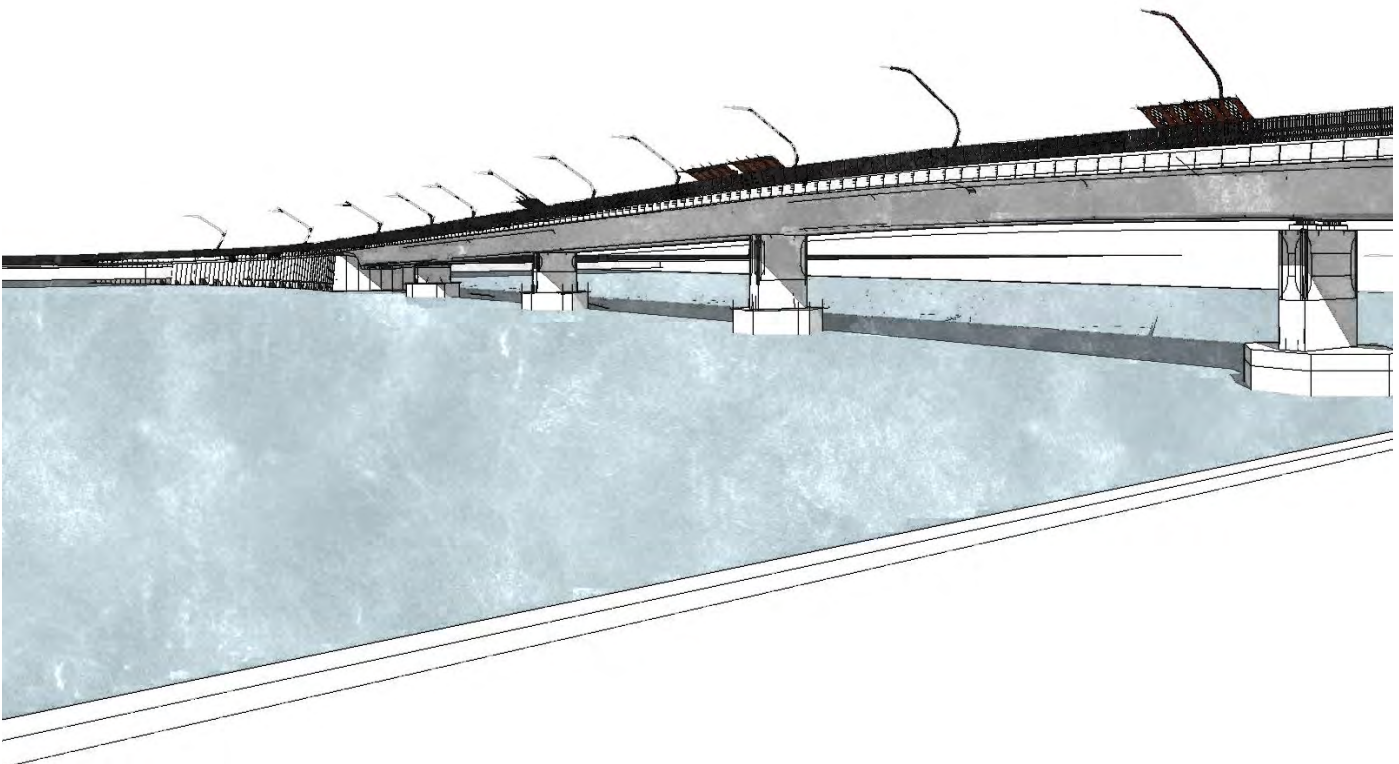




Homebush Bay Bridge | Environmental Assessment

PART D

Justification and conclusion



20 Justification and conclusion

20.1 Project justification

This proposal is for a pedestrian, cyclist and buses bridge which would potentially improve accessibility and connectivity to:

- / Rhodes Station and shopping centre for Wentworth Point precinct residents and Sydney Olympic Park residents.
- / Sydney Olympic Park ferry wharf and parklands and the future Wentworth Point maritime precinct for Rhodes residents.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the need for a bridge in Homebush Bay connecting Rhodes and Wentworth Point is specifically recognised in the following strategic documents:

- / *Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Plan 2003.*
- / *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005.*
- / *Homebush Bay West DCP 2004.*
- / *Rhodes West DCP 2011.*
- / *Sydney Olympic Park Authority Master Plan 2030.*

For details on how the proposal aligns with the aims and objectives of the strategic documents listed above please refer to Sections 2.5, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15 and 2.16 respectively.

NSW Government policies identified in Chapter 2 encourage travel choices towards more sustainable travel with greater use of active transport modes such as walking and cycling. The NSW Government policies also encourage public transport and more sustainable use of the car to reduce vehicle-kms travelled. The proposed Homebush Bay Bridge would meet these objectives. In particular, it would:

- / Provide a strategic link between Rhodes and Wentworth Point.
- / Play a crucial role in providing alternative transport options.
- / Facilitate the efficient movement of public transport services to meet the needs of existing and future transport demands of the area.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be justifiable.

20.2 Objects of the EP&A Act

Table 20.1 outlines the objects of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and their relevance to the proposed Homebush Bay Bridge.

Table 20.1 – Objectives of the EP&A Act and their relevance to the proposed bridge

Objects of the EP&A Act	Comment
a) to encourage: i) the proper management, development and conservation of natural and artificial resources, including agricultural land, natural areas, forests, minerals, water, cities, towns and villages for the purpose of promoting the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment,	The proposed bridge would enhance the connectivity between the communities at Rhodes and Wentworth Point. It would improve accessibility to public transport and create new pedestrian and cycling links that would promote walking and cycling. Accordingly, the proposal would enhance the social and economic welfare of the community.
ii) the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land,	The proposed bridge would promote the development of land at Rhodes and Wentworth Point. The benefits of having a bridge across Homebush Bay would have positive economic value.
Objects of the EP&A Act	Comment
iii) the protection, provision and co-ordination of communication and utility services,	The proposal would have the potential to carry utility services across Homebush Bay.
iv) the provision of land for public purposes,	The proposed bridge would be for public purposes.
v) the provision and co-ordination of community services and facilities,	Not relevant to the proposal.
vi) the protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats, and	The proposed mitigation measures would protect the environment. The biodiversity values of mangrove and saltmarsh communities, wetlands and migratory shorebird habitats – which occur near the bridge alignment – would be maintained.
vii) ecologically sustainable development, and	The proposal would address the principles of ecologically sustainable development (refer section 20.3).
viii) the provision and maintenance of affordable housing, and	Not relevant to the proposal.
b) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State, and	A number of State and local government authorities have been consulted in the preparation of this environmental assessment.
c) to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.	A comprehensive communications and consultation strategy has been adopted as part of this environmental assessment. This included the establishment of a community reference group, creation of a project website and 1800 community telephone line, project flyer, and the organisation and delivery of community information sessions (refer Chapter 6).

20.3 Ecologically sustainable development

The *NSW Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* highlights the need for effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes. Specifically, it identifies the following four principles to achieve ecologically sustainable development:

- / Precautionary principle. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.
- / Inter-generational equity. The present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.
- / Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity. Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration.
- / Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources. Environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services.

The definitions from the *NSW Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* are cross-referenced in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Table 20.2 details the assessment the proposed bridge development against the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

Table 20.2 – Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) assessment

ESD principle	Comment
Precautionary principle	This environmental assessment has taken into consideration all possible threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage. Conservative assumptions and worst-case scenarios were used for the preparation of this environmental assessment. An environmental risk analysis was conducted to identify and assess the potential environmental risks associated with the proposed development, taking into consideration their likelihood and consequences. Mitigation measures are proposed to minimise and manage identified impacts.
Inter-generational equity	The proposed development would be designed for a 100-year lifespan. Therefore, it would benefit existing and future residents and visitors.
Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity	Mitigation measures are proposed to minimise and manage the impacts on critical habitats, threatened species, populations and ecological communities and their habitats in the Homebush Bay area. The biodiversity values of nearby mangrove and saltmarsh communities of Homebush Bay, as well as the wetlands and migratory shorebird habitats, would be maintained.



Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources	Environmental and social benefits, as a result of the proposal, were considered as part of this environmental assessment. The value placed on these benefits is evident in the extent of the environmental investigations and the design of management measures.
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20.4 Conclusion

This environmental assessment addresses the requirements issued by the Director General of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for the proposal as well as other relevant issues identified by government authorities, the project’s community reference group and key stakeholders.

The proposal was found to provide a safe link over Homebush Bay between the two emerging communities of Rhodes and Wentworth Point for pedestrians, cyclists, public buses, maintenance and emergency vehicles while enabling continuing navigation of the bay. The proposal would also encourage the use of transport options other than private vehicles in the Homebush Bay area.

The proposed bridge design would fit with and contribute to Rhodes and Wentworth Point’s built forms, streetscapes and public domains; and to Homebush Bay’s proposed recreational maritime activities. The proposal would also fit well with the context and objectives of NSW Government’s strategic documents, environmental planning instruments and guidelines.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would have acceptable environmental, social and economic outcomes for the Homebush Bay area and the Sydney region.

There would be some anticipated environmental impacts. Based on the information used for the preparation of this environmental assessment, Arup has taken into account, to the fullest extent possible, all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment as a result of the proposed Homebush Bay Bridge and has concluded that the proposal would not have a significant impact on the environment provided the mitigation measures identified in this report were implemented.