



**Transport
for NSW**

Objective reference: A2230619

Sam Haddad
Director General
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Date: 9 April, 2013

Dear Mr Haddad

Rapid Transit Rail Facility – State significant infrastructure application

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) proposes to develop a Rapid Transit Rail Facility on land in the localities of Rouse Hill and Schofields. The Rapid Transit Rail Facility would comprise a purpose built train stabling and maintenance facility to support Sydney's new rapid transit rail network.

In accordance with Schedule 3, clause 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011, TfNSW has determined that the Rapid Transit Rail Facility is "*likely to significantly affect the environment*" requiring an environmental impact statement. In accordance with section 115X, TfNSW makes this State significant infrastructure application and requests the issue of Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs) for the Rapid Transit Rail Facility.

Attachment A provides details of the proposal, a preliminary environmental assessment and other supporting information to enable the DGRs to be issued.

As the project is consistent with the relevant provisions of the Act and accompanying Regulations and environmental planning instruments as State significant infrastructure, TfNSW requests that the Department of Planning and Infrastructure issue Director General's requirements to facilitate the preparation of an environmental impact statement for the Rapid Transit Rail Facility.

Please do not hesitate to contact Sue Haertsch on 8265 6309 if further information or details are required. We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss the proposal.

Yours sincerely

Rodd Staples
Project Director
North West Rail Link

ATTACHMENT A

State Significant Infrastructure Application

Rapid Transit Rail Facility

Background

Sydney's Rail Future: Modernising Sydney's Trains, released in June 2012, sets the long term strategy to increase the capacity of Sydney's rail network through investment in new services and upgrading of existing infrastructure. New generation, single deck rapid transit trains are a key element of the strategy.

The operational and land requirements for the rapid transit network are being progressed in accordance with the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan, released in December 2012. *Sydney's Rail Future* forms an integral component of this master plan. It is important to ensure that the delivery of rapid transit infrastructure can occur as outlined in *Sydney's Rail Future*.

The rapid transit services will commence with the North West Rail Link (NWRL) operating between Chatswood and Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill. *Sydney's Rail Future* envisages that rapid transit trains would be stabled and maintained at a purpose built facility at the western end of the NWRL.

The Rapid Transit Rail Facility is to cater for future expansion of the rapid transit system, including a future harbour crossing and link to the southern suburbs. The facility would be constructed in two phases and would provide stabling for 45 trains and maintenance facilities for 76 trains. The initial design capacity would be 20 trains (stabling and maintenance).

The NWRL project planned for a train stabling facility on land west of Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill. The environmental assessment for the NWRL stabling facility is contained in the Major Civil Construction Works Environmental Impact Statement (March 2012) and Stations, Rail Infrastructure and Systems Environmental Impact Statement (October 2012).

This application for the Rapid Transit Rail Facility does not seek to rely on the NWRL project approvals or applications.

Location and context

The proposed facility would occupy land between Tallawong Road, Schofields Road and First Ponds Creek in the localities of Rouse Hill and Schofields. Existing land uses are predominantly rural residential and include intensive animal and agriculture activities.

The site is within the Riverstone East Precinct, and adjoins the Riverstone Precinct, of the North West Growth Centre. Land uses are expected to change as urban development proceeds.

Precinct planning for the Riverstone East Precinct, on the eastern side of First Ponds Creek, is expected to commence in the near future. Land on the western side of the creek is within the Riverstone Precinct and has been rezoned. The Area 20 and Alex Avenue Precincts are to the east and south. Both of these areas have precinct plans in place.

The Rapid Transit Rail Facility Project

The Rapid Transit Rail Facility would comprise a purpose built train stabling and maintenance facility to support Sydney's new rapid transit rail network. The facility would be constructed in two phases with capacity for 20 trains at opening and a final design capacity to stable 45 eight car train sets and maintain 76 eight car train sets.

The facility would be a secure facility operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. An indicative site layout is shown in Figure 1. The future development site indicated along the Schofields Road frontage is not part of the application.

The facility would include:

- Train stabling facilities;
- Train maintenance facilities including those required for cleaning, inspection, preventative maintenance, corrective maintenance, component repair and major overhauls of rolling stock;
- Train wash and wheel lathe;
- A section of track to test trains for service;
- Facilities for maintenance and repair of rail systems, equipment and infrastructure;
- Warehousing for spare parts, tools and equipment;
- Administration, staff facilities and training facilities including an Operations Control Centre;
- Ancillary buildings as required for security services, power supply systems, refuse disposal and hazardous material storage;
- Bulk power sub-station and transformer facilities with secure access;
- Internal access and maintenance roads; and
- Safeguarding for a future transport corridor to Marsden Park.

The area for train stabling would be located on the southern side of the facility towards Schofields Road. The stabling sidings would be approximately 360m long and accommodate two eight car train sets on each siding. A service road would enable access around the outside of the stabling area.

The stabling sidings would be constructed in two phases with capacity for up to 20 trains at opening. The second phase (end state) would include capacity for stabling up to 45 trains.

Maintenance of rolling stock would occur within a workshop towards the centre of the site. The maintenance workshop would consist of eight maintenance tracks constructed in two phases. Four tracks would be provided at opening and the remaining four in the second phase (end state) to support an ultimate capacity for maintaining 76 eight car train sets.

The maintenance workshop would be approximately 260m long, 100m wide and 15m high. All maintenance activities would be conducted within the building. The structure would have operable doors at either end to enclose the space in order to minimise noise.

An infrastructure workshop would be provided on the northern side of the maintenance workshop. The infrastructure workshop would include facilities for storing and servicing rail track infrastructure equipment.

An infrastructure workshop building measuring approximately 100m in length by 14m wide would provide a marshalling area for infrastructure operations. The approximate height of the workshop building would be 15m.

Operations, maintenance and administration for the rapid transit network would be coordinated and managed from the site. An administration building would incorporate a rapid transit Operations Control Centre where command, control, system monitoring and communications functions would take place. The building would also include office facilities and amenities for rapid transit staff.

The proposed administration building would be located near the main site entrance from Tallawong Road. The two storey building would have an indicative footprint of 80m by 30m, and a maximum height of 8m. The indicative gross floor area of the administration building would be approximately 2,400m².

Vehicle access to the site would be from Tallawong Road. The main site entry would be on the northern side of the rail facility tracks. A secondary site access would be located at the northern end of the Tallawong Road frontage. All site access points would be security controlled.

An internal access road would facilitate movements within the site including access for maintenance vehicles to the stabling tracks, wheel lathe, bogie drop, train wash and signalling and communications equipment building and administrative buildings. The internal access road would also allow emergency vehicle access and access for garbage and waste collection.

Vehicle parking areas would be provided for staff and visitors. Around 180 parking spaces would be distributed around the site based on estimated staffing within different areas of the facility.

The facility would be a high security site that would be fully self-contained with back-up power supplies and access control/security systems. The site would also accommodate the needs of emergency services. The site would be expected to support approximately 300 staff.

Strategic planning context

NSW 2021

NSW 2021 is the NSW Government's 10 year plan to grow the NSW economy, return quality services, renovate infrastructure, strengthen local environments and communities, and restore accountability to Government. *NSW 2021* contains goals, targets and actions to guide the direction of development in the state.

The Rapid Transit Rail Facility project is consistent with the goals, actions and targets of the NSW 2021 particularly in terms of renovating infrastructure.

Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031

The Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031 is on exhibition for public comment until 31 May, 2013. The draft Strategy prioritises housing and jobs growth across Sydney, and recognises the importance of key locations or 'city shapers' that will play an important role in shaping future growth across greater Sydney.

The city shapers will help to make sure the right transport and infrastructure are close to places where people live and work. These include the Global Economic Corridor, which will be extended towards Norwest and Parramatta CBD, and the North West Rail Link corridor.

The draft Strategy recognises that good transport infrastructure, high levels of accessibility and cross regional connectivity are critical for Sydney to sustain its global status. The draft Strategy promotes coordination with the Long Term Transport Master Plan and State Infrastructure

Strategy and supports the infrastructure and service improvements that will deliver connectivity and accessibility across the city.

The Rapid Transit Rail Facility would be integral to key initiatives of the Long Term Transport Master Plan and would support the Draft Metropolitan Strategy objectives to improve accessibility and connectivity to major employment hubs.

NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan (incorporating *Sydney's Rail Future*)

The NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan was released in December 2012. The Plan defines the direction for transport planning for the next 20 years, and sets the framework for transport and policy decisions to enable the NSW Government to deliver an integrated, modern transport system that puts the customer first. Solutions and actions are identified to respond to key challenges and to integrate, modernise, grow and manage the transport system in the short, medium and long term.

Sydney's Rail Future is an integral element of the Long Term Transport Master Plan. *Sydney's Rail Future* is a long term plan to increase the capacity of Sydney's rail network through investment in new services and upgrading existing infrastructure. Stages 3, 4 and 5 of Sydney's Rail Future include completion of the North West Rail Link, a second Harbour crossing and new CBD line and extension of the new single deck service to Bankstown and Hurstville. The Rapid Transit Rail Facility would be a key component of the long-term rapid transit network.

Permissibility and statutory planning

The Project is State significant infrastructure pursuant to Part 5.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (the Act) for the following reasons.

Section 115U of the Act identifies that development can be declared State significant infrastructure through a State environmental planning policy. Part 3 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* contains the provisions for State significant infrastructure. Clause 14 declares development to be State significant infrastructure for the purposes of the Act if it is permissible without consent under Part 4 of the Act and specified in Schedule 3 of the SEPP. Schedule 3, clause 1 (General public authority activities) includes the following:

- (1) Infrastructure or other development that (but for Part 5.1 of the Act and within the meaning of Part 5 of the Act) would be an activity for which the proponent is also the determining authority and would, in the opinion of the proponent, require an environmental impact statement to be obtained under Part 5 of the Act.

Project justification

Sydney's rail system needs to be modernised. The challenge posed by the complex ageing system means that the current network cannot grow sufficiently to meet forecast demand. The current network does not deliver what customers want – shorter journey times and services that are more regular, more reliable and tailored to different customer needs.

In line with the approach of focussing specifically on the different needs of customers, *Sydney's Rail Future* will deliver a three-tiered system to respond to changing customer needs. Rapid transit, 'turn up and go' trains, comprise Tier 1 services.

A whole-of-network approach has been taken to long term planning for *Sydney's Rail Future*. It has closely anticipated future demand across the network to identify areas requiring significant capacity increases.

Implementation of the strategy will unfold through a long term program of service improvements, capital works and network upgrades. The proposed Rapid Transit Rail Facility would facilitate Stage 4 (second Harbour Crossing) and Stage 5 (Southern sector conversion) of the *Sydney's Rail Future* strategy including:

- Completion of a new tunnel under the Harbour and a new Sydney CBD line, allowing services from the North West Rail Link to extend directly to the Sydney CBD
- The second Harbour Crossing will create the largest increase in capacity to the Sydney rail network for 80 years
- Untangling the CBD enables major capacity increases on the Western Line
- Extension of the new single deck service to Bankstown and Hurstville
- Continue major timetable changes to the existing suburban services to continue major capacity increases to the South West and Western Sydney
- Better express services introduced due to separation from rapid transit.

Consultation

Initial consultation has occurred with the regional office of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. Further consultation would be undertaken as part of the environmental assessment process, including consultation with agencies (Roads and Maritime Services, Blacktown City Council, Urban Growth) and local stakeholders (landowners, community groups, schools and local businesses).

Environmental issues

TfNSW has identified key environmental issues that will require detailed assessment and may require project specific mitigation measures. The preliminary assessment is based on baseline information and technical reports prepared for the North West Rail Link Environmental Impact Statements (Major Civil Construction Works, March 2012, and Stations, Rail Infrastructure and Systems, October 2012) and related studies.

The key environmental issues are summarised in Table 1 and are expected to include:

- Land use, property and infrastructure planning;
- Biodiversity and ecology;
- Traffic and transport;
- Noise and vibration;
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage and Aboriginal archaeology;
- Flooding and hydrology;
- Bushfire;
- Visual impacts, landscape and urban design; and
- Social and economic impacts.

Other potential environmental considerations that could arise include:

- Air quality;

- Greenhouse gases;
- Waste management and resource use; and
- Cumulative impacts.

These issues are expected to be of lesser consequence in the context of the project scope, existing environment and the implementation of standard management and safeguard measures.

Figure 1 – Indicative site layout

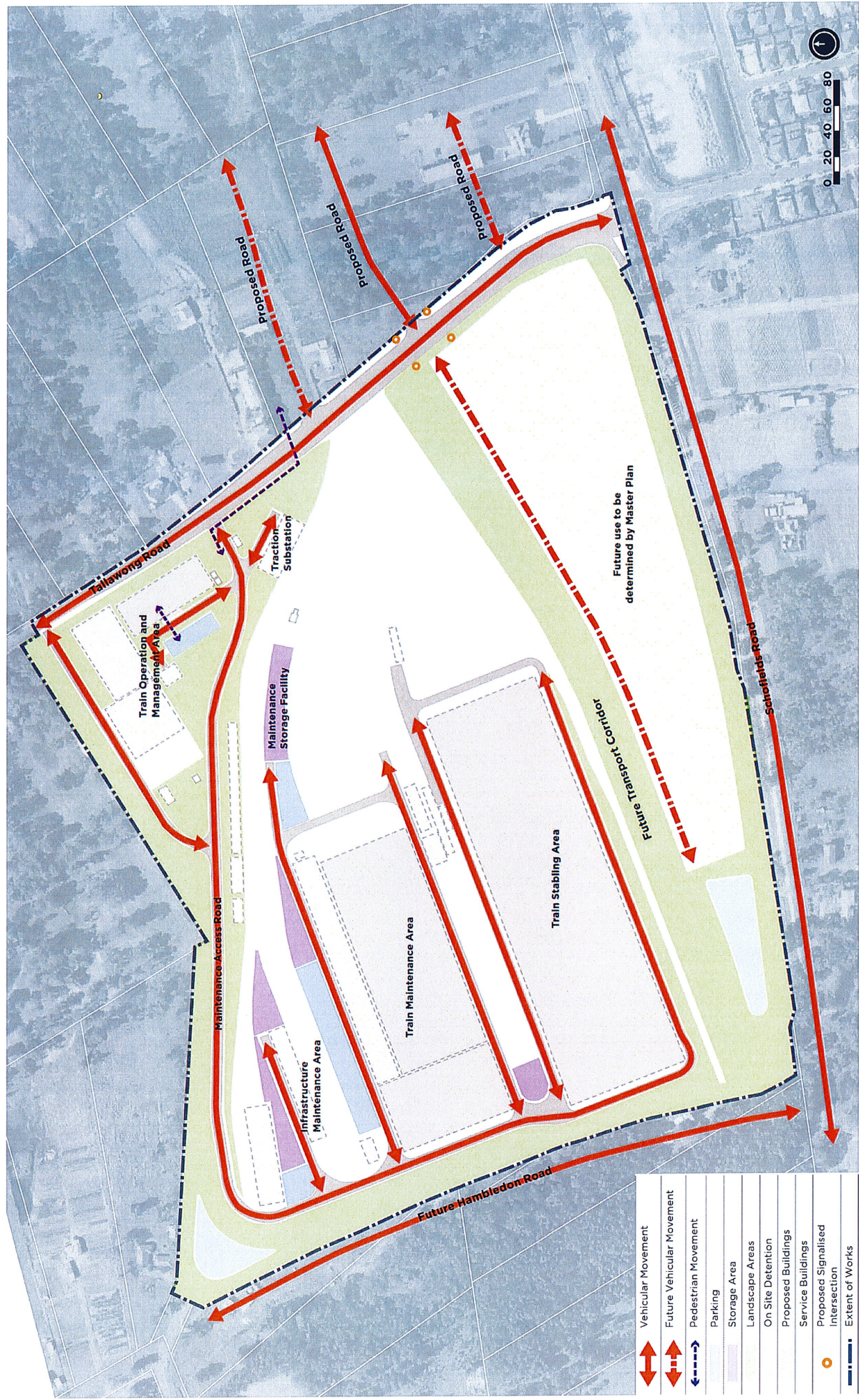


TABLE 1 – Preliminary environmental assessment

Key environmental issue	Possible issues and impacts	Further assessment
Land use, property and infrastructure planning	<p>The site is at the southern edge of the Riverstone East Precinct of the North West Growth Centre. The Riverstone Precinct is to the west and Alex Avenue Precinct is to the south.</p> <p>Although existing land uses are predominantly rural residential/semi-urban, the Riverstone Precinct plan zones immediately adjoining land drainage and open space with low and medium density residential development beyond. The Alex Avenue Precinct Plan zones land along Schofields Road for drainage and residential use.</p> <p>Precinct planning for the Riverstone East precinct is expected to commence in the near future. Implications of existing and likely future land uses will be relevant considerations for the environmental assessment.</p> <p>Further assessment to determine the potential for the proposed facility to affect existing public utility infrastructure and services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implications for existing and future planning, land use and development strategies including planning for the Riverstone East Precinct. 2. Identify any impacts on existing and planned infrastructure and utility services, and any actions to protect or mitigate against impacts.
Biodiversity and ecology	<p>Biodiversity and ecological considerations for the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on endangered or critically endangered ecological communities (flora and fauna) • Potential impacts on riparian vegetation and aquatic ecology of First Ponds Creek and its tributaries. <p>A strategic certification for the North West and South West Growth Centres under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 was approved on 28 February 2012. Further assessment is required to determine whether the proposed facility will affect vegetation within the certified and/or non-certified areas and the associated statutory requirements.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flora and fauna impacts including impacts on threatened species (aquatic and terrestrial), critical habitats (aquatic and terrestrial), populations, ecological communities, native vegetation and corridors.
Transport and traffic	<p>Schofields Road forms the southern boundary of the site. The arterial road, which links east-west from Schofields to Rouse Hill, is currently being upgraded by Roads and Maritime Services to provide two lanes in each direction between Windsor Road and Hambledon Road.</p> <p>The Schofields Road upgrade is expected to incorporate realignment of Tallawong Road to align with Ridgeline Drive. RMS has previously indicated that access should not be directly from Schofields Road. The proposed access to the facility is consistent with this recommendation.</p> <p>Longer term plans for the locality may include a northern extension of Hambledon Road. The timing would be determined by future urban development in the locality.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Potential impacts on the local and regional road network during construction and operation. 2. Consultation with Roads and Maritime Services.

Noise and vibration	There would be a number of potential sources of noise within the facility associated with train movements and maintenance activities, including heavy vehicle movements around the site. Although the main noise generating activities would occur within acoustic enclosures, there is potential for operations to generate noise intrusion to adjoining and nearby properties.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider potential noise impacts from operations in relation to existing and likely future land uses. 2. Consider potential noise impacts during construction.
Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage and Aboriginal archaeology	<p>Areas of potential archaeological deposits are known to occur in the vicinity of the site. Site specific assessment and research will be required to identify likely sites and potential impacts.</p> <p>Previous studies have assessed the potential for archaeological and non-Indigenous heritage on the site to be low. Further assessment is required to confirm likely impacts.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify areas of direct and indirect impact (including areas of heritage potential), assess the heritage significance of any sites and consider potential measures to offset any unavoidable impact on heritage. 2. Ensure consistency with the strategies/approach developed for the Growth Centres.
Flooding and hydrology	<p>The site is within the catchment of First Ponds Creek and is potentially affected by flood risks associated with the creek and its tributaries. The riparian corridor has been identified as an area of potential high salinity risk.</p> <p>Potential impacts and issues for the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to surface water and stormwater flows • Impacts on salinity levels of the riparian corridor. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flood impact assessment in accordance with the NSW Government Floodplain Development Manual (2005). 2. Identify potential increases in flood levels, duration, hazard impacts, and mitigation options through appropriate flood modelling. 3. Impacts on soil salinity and potential acid sulphate soils.
Bushfire	There is potential for bush fire threat along the First Ponds Creek corridor. More detailed studies are required to confirm the extent of any bushfire prone land and required mitigation measures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and assess any potential bushfire threat to the site.
Visual impacts, landscape and urban design	The proposed facility requires a level site for operational purposes. This results in changes to the natural ground levels, particularly along the western boundary, which could impact the visual amenity of the locality, particularly in combination with loss of vegetation. The construction phase would also introduce new elements into the visual landscape.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and evaluate the key visual impacts of the project. 2. Prepare urban design principles to guide detailed design for the facility including opportunities for landscaping to provide visual screening.
Social and economic impacts	<p>The proposed facility will introduce a new land use in a locality that is earmarked for future urban development. Issues arising include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employment during construction and operation • Potential amenity impacts to properties in the vicinity of the site. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify social benefits and impacts of the project on the local community and existing sensitive land uses in the vicinity of the site. 2. Identify any business impacts and economic impacts to the locality.