



Planning &
Environment

**STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT:
Sydney Zoo
SSD-7228**



Environmental Assessment Report
Section 89H of the
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

November 2016

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Published November 2016
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
www.planning.nsw.gov.au

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Applicant	Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd
AS	Australian Standard
BCA	Building Code of Australia
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CIV	Capital Investment Value
Commission	Planning Assessment Commission
Construction	The carrying out of works, including earthworks, erection of buildings and other infrastructure covered by this consent
Council	Blacktown City Council
DA	Development Application
Dangerous Goods	As defined by the Australian Dangerous Goods Code 7th Edition (Australian Government, 2010)
Day	The period from 7 am to 6 pm on Monday to Saturday, and 8am to 6pm on Sundays and Public Holidays
Department	Department of Planning and Environment
Development	The Development as described in the EIS and RTS and approved by this Development consent for the development and operation of a zoo within the Bungarribee Precinct in the Western Sydney Parklands
DPI	Department of Primary Industries
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement titled " <i>Sydney Zoo SSD 7228 – Environmental Impact Statement</i> " prepared by JBA Urban Planning Consultants
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i>
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
Evening	The period from 6 pm to 10 pm
Minister	Minister for Planning
Night	The periods from 10 pm to 7 am on Monday to Saturday, and 10 pm to 8 am on Sundays and public holidays
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
Operation	Operation of a zoological facility
PEA	Preliminary Environmental Assessment
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services
RTS	Response to Submissions, titled " <i>Sydney Zoo SSD 7228 – Response to Submissions</i> " dated May 2016 and prepared by JBA
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
Secretary	Secretary of the Department of Planning & Environment
Sensitive receiver	Residence, education institution, health care facility, religious facility and child care facility
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
Site	Lot 11 of Lot 101 in DP 1195067 within the Western Sydney Parklands, as currently leased to Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd
SRD SEPP	<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011</i>
TfNSW	Transport for NSW
WSPT	Western Sydney Parklands Trust

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd (Sydney Zoo) (the Applicant) is seeking development consent for the construction and operation of a zoological facility within the Western Sydney Parklands at Bungarribee in the Blacktown local government area (LGA). The proposed development is referred to as Sydney Zoo and will have a total area of approximately 16.5 hectares.

The application will facilitate the construction and operation of a new recreational facility for Western Sydney which will comprise a zoological facility containing animal exhibits and associated infrastructure. The site will operate from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm seven days a week with extended hours during the peak summer period of December and January.

The proposed development has a capital investment value (CIV) of \$28 million. It will generate approximately 160 jobs during construction and 59 full-time equivalent jobs during operation.

The proposed development is strategically located within the Western Sydney Parklands (WSP) which allows for development to be permissible with consent. The proposed development is classified as State significant development (SSD) under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) as it involves development within the Western Sydney Parklands with a capital investment value of more than \$10 million. This satisfies the requirements of Schedule 2 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (the SRD SEPP). Consequently, the Minister for Planning is the consent authority for the proposed development.

The Department exhibited the Development Application and accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from 10 December 2015 to 8 February 2016. A total of 56 submissions were received, including a submission from Blacktown City Council and ten (10) submissions from other public authorities. Forty-five (45) submissions from other organisations and the general public were received, of which 35 were in the nature of objection. This included a detailed submission from the nearby Featherdale Wildlife Park (Featherdale).

The submissions received from Council and public authorities provided comments on the proposed development in relation to a number of environmental matters including traffic and access, stormwater management and ecology and landscaping. Key concerns raised by the public related to the potential introduction of weeds, impacts to endangered ecological communities, animal welfare and the privatisation of public space.

The Applicant prepared a Response to Submissions (RTS) report to address the issues raised in all of the submissions. In response to the submissions received, the Applicant revised the design of the overflow carpark to reduce the impact upon an endangered ecological community and made further commitments to minimise the impacts on the environment, including management of existing weeds onsite (and confirmation weeds would not be planted) as well as commitments to ensure water discharge structures are appropriately designed. As the RTS revised the scope of the application, the Department re-notified the application.

The Department received 8 submissions on the RTS including four from public authorities (Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW), Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA)). In addition, submissions were received from two special interest groups and two from members of the general public. The Applicant provided supplementary information to address the additional issues raised.

The Department's assessment of the application has fully considered all relevant matters under Section 79C of the EP&A Act, the objects of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development. The Department identified the following key issues for assessment:

- social and economic impacts upon the locality;
- traffic and access; and
- stormwater and water quality.

Given the complexity of the social and economic issues, the Department engaged HillPDA to undertake a peer review of the economic impacts and sought advice from the Department's social impact specialist.

The economic review indicated there would be sufficient market within greater Sydney to sustain both Sydney Zoo and Featherdale. In addition, the review indicated that if the offering of the proposed development were differentiated to that of Featherdale, there may be an opportunity for the facilities to coexist, creating a tourist destination within Western Sydney.

The Department's social review identified the importance of the Applicant consulting with the local community throughout the construction and operation of the proposed development as a means of providing genuine input into the operations at the site. The Department supports the Applicant's approach to differentiating its facility such as through placing an emphasis on having exotic animals and integrating an Aboriginal cultural experience with its exhibition of native animals. This differentiation will assist in the continued operation of Featherdale, enabling Western Sydney to continue to grow as a tourist destination.

To further manage and mitigate the social and economic impacts of the proposed development, the Department has recommended the following conditions:

- a requirement for the Applicant to outline how the offering of the proposed development would differ from existing facilities;
- a restriction on the exhibition of Australian native animals to a specified area of the proposed development; and
- a requirement to provide details of an ongoing engagement plan to encourage the Applicant to work with nearby facilities to increase the tourist offering of Western Sydney.

To address the residual traffic and water quality impacts arising from the proposed development, the Department has recommended the following conditions:

- development and implementation of an operational traffic management plan which is to include additional management measures to address potential traffic and parking requirements during peak visitation times, particularly during the first year of operation; and
- a detailed water quality monitoring program to monitor any changes in the receiving waterways as a result of the proposed development and detail additional management measures that would be implemented to minimise any impacts.

With the implementation of recommended conditions, it is considered the impacts of the proposed development can be appropriately managed and/or mitigated.

The proposed development will enhance the tourism offering for the growing region of Western Sydney. The Department's assessment concludes the issues associated with the proposed development have been addressed by the EIS, the RTS and through the assessment process and any residual impacts can be managed by implementation of the recommended conditions.

Overall, the Department considers the proposed development satisfies the relevant environmental, economic and social requirements and on this basis, it could be approved, subject to conditions.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. The Department's Assessment

This report details the Department's assessment of the State significant development application (SSD 7228) for the Sydney Zoo. The proposed development involves the construction and operation of a zoo in the Blacktown local government area (LGA). The Department's assessment considers all documentation submitted by the Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd (the Applicant), including the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Response to Submissions (RTS) and supplementary information in addition to submissions received from government authorities, stakeholders and the general public. The Department's assessment also considers the legislation and planning instruments relevant to the site and the proposed development.

This report describes the proposed development, surrounding environment, relevant strategic and statutory planning and the issues raised in submissions. The report evaluates the key issues associated with the proposed development and provides recommendations for managing any impacts during construction and operation. The Department's assessment of the Sydney Zoo has concluded that the proposed development should be approved, subject to conditions.

1.2. Development Background

Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd (the Applicant), is seeking development consent to construct and operate a zoological facility, in the Blacktown LGA. The site is located approximately 33 kilometres (km) west of the Sydney Central Business District and approximately 4.5 km south-west of the Blacktown town centre. The site occupies approximately 16.5 hectares (ha) within the Western Sydney Parklands (WSP). The site is in close proximity to the M4 Motorway, M7 Motorway and the Great Western Highway (see Figure 1).

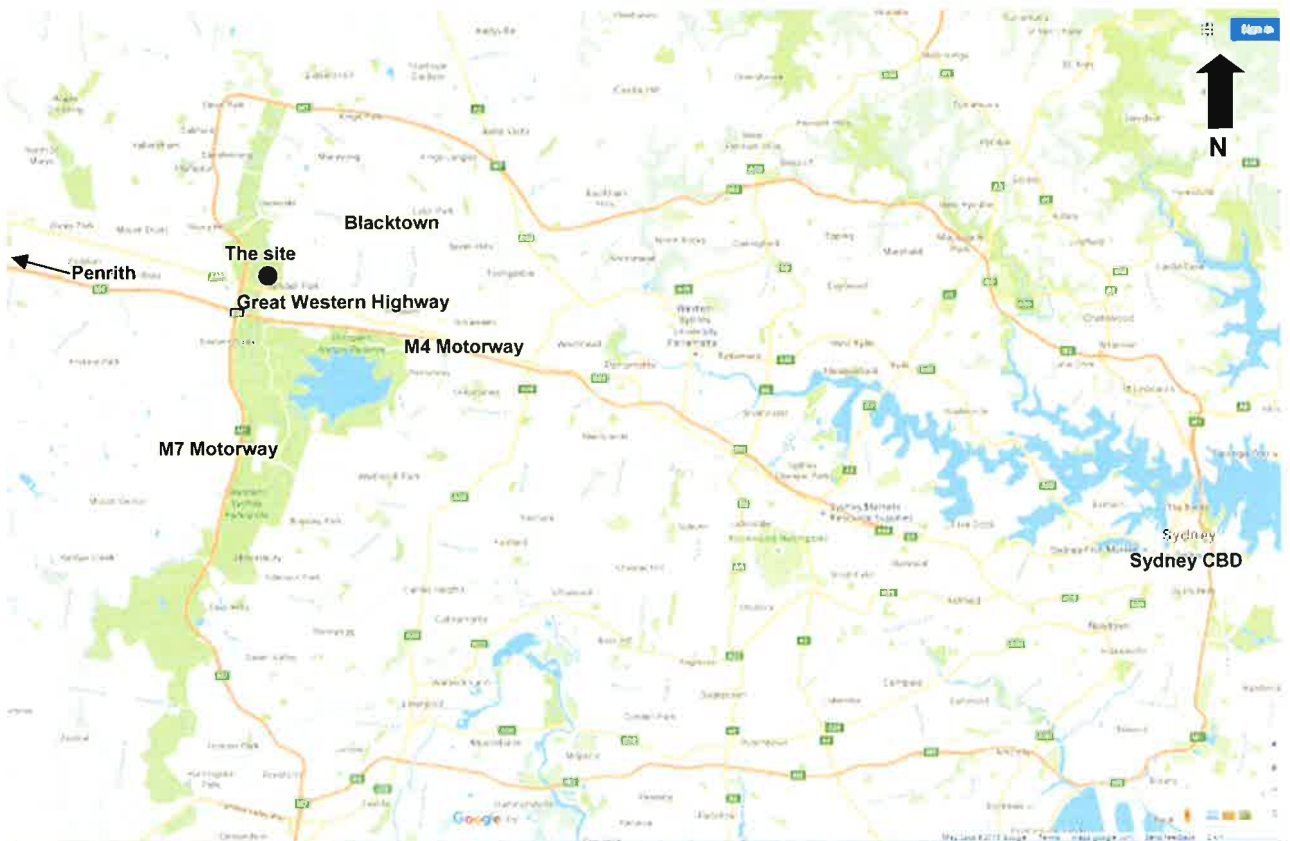


Figure 1: Site Location

The site is located within the Bungarrinbee Precinct of the WSP which is managed by the Western Sydney Parklands Trust (WSPT). The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Parklands) 2009* (WSP SEPP) enables the WSPT to develop the Western Sydney Parklands into a multi-use urban

parkland, allowing for a range of recreational, entertainment and tourist facilities. In March 2014, the WSPT implemented the *Parklands Plan of Management 2020* that was adopted by the then Minister of Environment and the Minister for Heritage. The plan provides a strategic management framework for the WSP and assists WSPT in determining actions and priorities. The plan identifies the Bungarribee Precinct as an area of 216 ha having the capacity to become a recreational and tourism hub for Western Sydney.

1.3. Site Description

The site is legally described as Lot 11 of Lot 101 in Deposited Plan 1195067 and is located in the suburb of Bungarribee with a frontage to the Great Western Highway. Under the WSP SEPP, the site is unzoned. Development carried out by a non-public authority for the purposes of recreational facilities may be carried out in the WSP with development consent.

The site is predominantly cleared of vegetation with small areas of two key vegetation communities; Cumberland Plain Woodland and River Flat Eucalypt Forest (see **Figure 3**). The remainder of the site contains exotic grasslands with some weeds.

The land rises to a small ridge which runs north-south through the eastern third of the site. The land also slopes to the west towards Eastern Creek which forms the western boundary of the site.

1.4. Surrounding Land Uses

The site is surrounded by industrial land uses to the immediate east and south and detached residential dwellings to the north and the west beyond the M7 Motorway. The closest residential receiver is a single detached dwelling approximately 275 metres (m) to the south on the opposite side of the Great Western Highway.

The Bunya residential development within Bungarribee is located approximately 800 m to the north. To the immediate south-west is the Huntingwood West Business Park, which comprises over 60 ha of employment lands. Further to the south-east is the Eastern Creek Raceway, native bushland and Prospect Reservoir (see **Figure 2**). Approximately 3 km to the north-east is the Featherdale Wildlife Park (Featherdale).



Figure 2: Regional Context

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Description of the Development

The SSD application seeks consent to construct and operate a new zoological facility containing animals and associated infrastructure within the Bungarribee Precinct of the Western Sydney Parklands. The main development components are presented within **Table 1** and a sit layout plan is shown in **Figure 3**.

Table 1: Main Development Components

Aspect	Description
Development Summary	An SSD application for the construction and operation of a zoological facility containing animal exhibits and associated infrastructure.
Proposed Use	Recreational facility
Subdivision	Subdivision of the current Lot 101 in DP 1195067 into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lot 11 containing proposed development (16.505ha); and Lot 10 containing remainder of current Lot 101 (188.9ha).
Site Preparation Works	Bulk earthworks to provide minor regrading, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exhibit wall mounds and moats; and utilisation of approximately 4,700m³ of clean fill (of which 4,500m³ will be imported).
Facility Description	A new zoological facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> entry/retail building; restaurant; administration, curatorial, and veterinary facilities; exhibit buildings; show arena; back of exhibits and work depot buildings; and other buildings including two kiosks and restroom facilities.
Access and Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicular access would be via an access road from the Great Western Highway extending along the eastern boundary of the site. Access road within the Western Sydney Parklands and entry roundabout will be constructed by the WSPT.
Signage	Signage proposed includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> entry/retail building signage; and internal navigational signage.
Stormwater and Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site will be divided into three sub-catchment areas where stormwater will be captured, treated, and redirected to stormwater harvesting storage areas. Harvested stormwater will be re-used on site (irrigation, wet moats, greywater) and/or discharged via the three discharge basins.
Infrastructure and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewerage network: a right of easement will be granted for access to an existing trunk sewer main running through the western part of the site; Water: the existing water mains adjacent to the site along the Great Western Highway will service the site; and Electricity: the New Huntingwood electrical zone substation will service the site.
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting of both exotic and native species for the purposes of shading, screening, educational programming, koala feed harvesting, and to ensure a contiguous connection to the wider Parklands; and Three vegetation zones for the habitat areas will be created, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South East Asian Tropical; African Grasslands; and Cumberland Plain Woodland.
Hours of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 am to 6 pm, seven days a week with extended hours to 10 pm during December and January.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 458 car parking spaces, including coach and minibus parking bays; 18 accessible parking spaces (disabled spaces); and 577 overflow car parking spaces.
Capital Investment Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$28,000,000

Aspect	Description
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 160 construction jobs; and• 59 full-time equivalent jobs during operation.

2.2. Applicant's Need and Justification

The WSPT invited prospective developers to submit responses to a 'Request for Proposals' to provide a tourism facility within the Bungarrabee Precinct. Sydney Zoo was the successful tenderer and in December 2014 subsequently entered into a lease with WSPT that was approved by the then Minister for the Environment in 2015.

The Applicant seeks to develop a tourism hub in the Bungarrabee Precinct as presented within the *Parklands Plan of Management 2020* (Parklands POM) and *Parklands Plan of Management 2020 Supplement* (POM Supplement). The Parklands POM and POM Supplement identify three tourism hubs within the WSP. The WSPT has indicated that these tourism hubs, once operational, would add an estimated 50,000 international tourism visitor nights per annum to Sydney, contributing to the tourism-related business in the Sydney metropolitan region. The Applicant seeks to develop one of these tourism hubs to contribute to achieving these goals.

Further, the site secured by the Applicant is readily accessible from the Great Western Highway which provides a link from Sydney to the Blue Mountains and further west to Bathurst. The location of the site would make it readily accessible by the growing population of Western Sydney.

The proposed development will provide employment opportunities within close proximity to existing and planned residential areas in Western Sydney, consistent with the goals, directions, and actions outlined in *A Plan for Growing Sydney*.

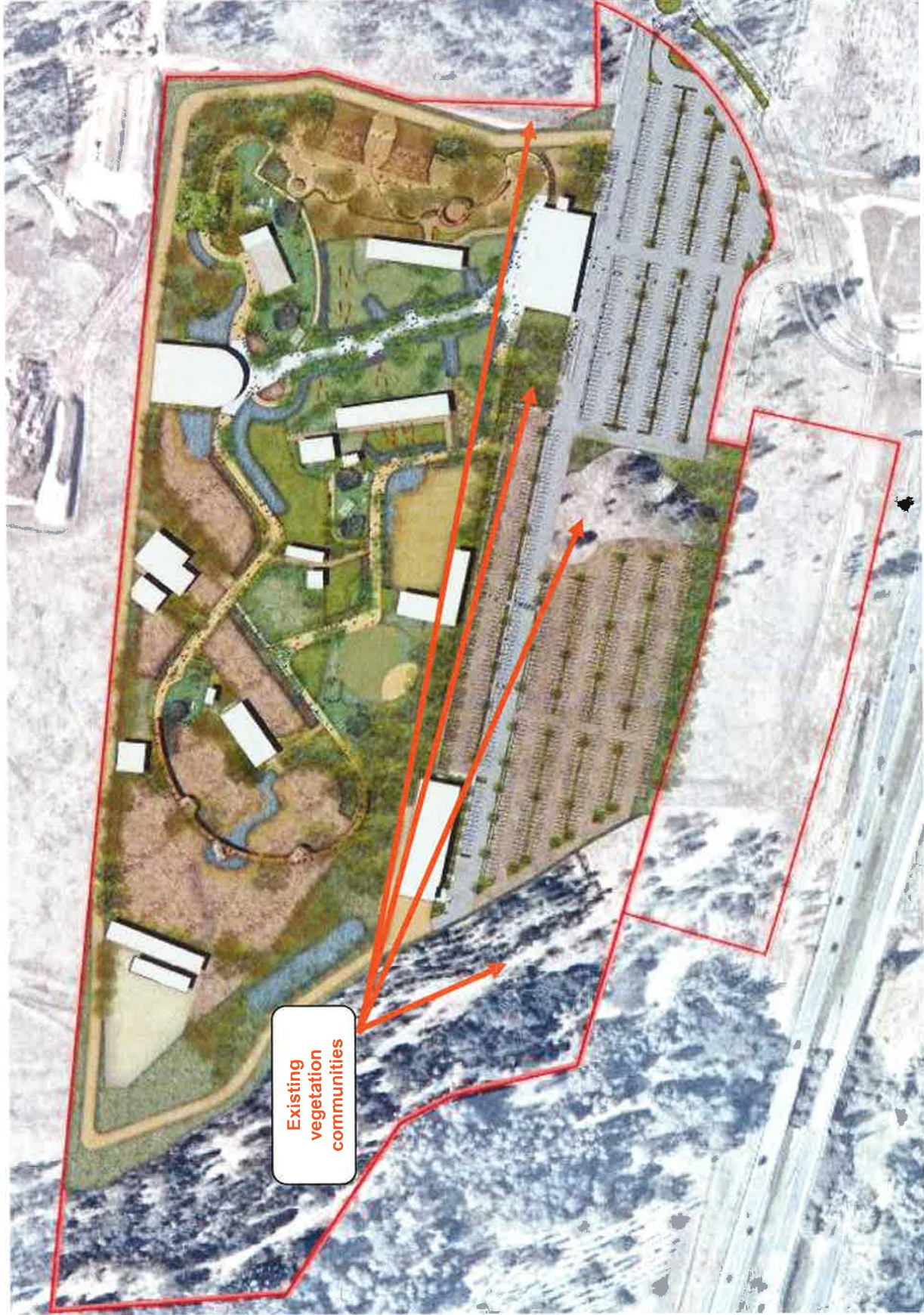


Figure 3: Overview of Sydney Zoo - Masterplan (including indication of retained key vegetation communities)

3. STRATEGIC AND STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1. Strategic Context

The NSW Government has announced the Premier's Priorities which cover 12 key areas including economic growth, provision of infrastructure, protection of vulnerable communities, improving education and environmental protection. One of the Premier's key priorities is 'Creating Jobs'. The NSW Government aims to provide 150,000 new jobs over the next four years.

The proposed development would contribute towards 'Creating Jobs' by providing 160 new construction jobs and 59 full-time equivalent operational jobs in the Blacktown LGA. The proposed development also represents a \$28 million investment in Western Sydney.

The proposed development is also consistent with the goals, directions and actions outlined in *A Plan for Growing Sydney* as it will:

- assist with the transformation of Western Sydney by providing growth and investment in a location with high levels of accessibility to the regional road network (Direction 1.4);
- provide additional employment opportunities within close proximity to existing residential developments in Western Sydney (Direction 1.4);
- support tourism, identified as a priority economic sector (Direction 1.9); and
- support the Sydney Green Grid project via delivery of a tourism facility in accordance with the Western Sydney Parklands Plan of Management (Action 3.2.1).

The Greater Sydney Commission has released the draft of six district plans encompassing Greater Sydney which will guide the delivery of A Plan for Growing Sydney. The draft district plans set out the vision, priorities and actions for the development of each district. The proposed development is located within the West Central District which is identified as one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing regions in Australia. The proposed development would assist in meeting one of the productivity priorities of the draft district plan through supporting the growth of tourism infrastructure in the district.

3.2. State Significant Development

The proposed development is a State significant development pursuant to section 89C of the EP&A Act because it involves development with a CIV of more than \$10 million for the purpose of a cultural, recreation or tourist facility within an area of State significance. As such, the proposed development satisfies the criteria in clause 13 of Schedule 1 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011*. Consequently, the Minister for Planning is the consent authority for the proposed development.

3.3. Permissibility

The site is subject to the zoning provisions outlined in WSP SEPP. All land in the WSP is unzoned and all landuses are permissible with development consent with the exception of residential accommodation.

The Applicant seeks consent for the development for the purposes of a zoological facility. The proposed use of the site is permissible with consent under the WSP SEPP.

3.4. Consent Authority

On 14 September 2011, the then Minister for Planning delegated the functions to determine SSD applications to the Planning Assessment Commission (the Commission), where:

- the relevant local council has made an objection;
- there are more than 25 public submissions in the nature of objections; or
- a political disclosure statement has been made.

Under the Ministerial Delegation, the Commission must determine the SSD application as more than 25 public submissions in the nature of objection were received during the public exhibition of the EIS.

3.5. Other Approvals

Under Section 89K of the EP&A Act, other approvals may be required and must be approved in a manner that is consistent with any Part 4 consent for the SSD under the EP&A Act.

In its submission the DPI (Animal Welfare Unit) advised that the Applicant would be required to submit an application to the DPI under the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986* prior to commencing any acquisition of animals or operations. The Department has incorporated DPI (Animal Welfare Unit)'s requirements into the recommended conditions.

3.6. Considerations under Section 79C of the EP&A Act

Section 79C of the EP&A Act sets out matters to be considered by a consent authority when determining a development application. The Department's consideration of these matters is set out in **Section 5** and **Appendix B**.

3.7. Environmental Planning Instruments

Under Section 79C of the EP&A Act, the consent authority, when determining a development application, must take into consideration the provisions of any environmental planning instrument (EPI) and draft EPI (that has been subject to public consultation and notified under the EP&A Act) that apply to the proposed development.

The Department has considered the proposed development against the provisions of several key environmental planning instruments, including:

- *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Parklands) 2009;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 – Advertising and Signage;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development; and*
- *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 20—Hawkesbury-Nepean River.*

Detailed consideration of the provisions of all EPIs that apply to the proposed development is provided in **Appendix C** of this report. The Department is satisfied that the proposed development complies with the relevant provisions of these EPIs.

3.8. Public Exhibition and Notification

Under Section 89F(1) of the EP&A Act, the Secretary is required to make the development application and any accompanying information of an SSD application publicly available for at least 30 days. The application and accompanying EIS was publicly exhibited from 10 December 2015 to 8 February 2016. Details of the exhibition process and notifications are provided in **Section 4.1**.

3.9. Objects of the EP&A Act

The Department has fully considered the objects of the EP&A Act, including the encouragement of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD), in its assessment of the application.

The Department considers the following objects are the most relevant to the assessment of this application:

- (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;*
 - (ii) *the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land;*
 - (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;*
 - (vii) *ecologically sustainable development;*
- (b) *to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State; and*
- (c) *to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.*

The Department has given due consideration to these objects in its assessment of the proposal in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Objects of the EP&A Act and Relevance to the Proposed Development

Object	Consideration
5(a)(i)	The proposed development would ensure the proper management and development of land identified as being suitable for the purposes of a tourism hub in the Western Sydney Parklands as identified within the Parklands POM and POM Supplement. This will result in economic enhancement of the locality including the provision of 160 construction jobs and 59 full-time equivalent operational jobs within the Parklands. The proposed development has been designed to meet current best practice environmental standards. The potential impacts of the proposed development have been minimised through appropriate site selection, site layout, design and proposed environmental control measures.
5(a)(ii)	The proposed development is located on land identified as being suitable for development of a tourism hub, would generate revenue for the Parklands, and would generate 160 construction jobs.
5(a)(vi)	The Department's assessment in Section 5 of this report demonstrates that with the implementation of the recommended conditions of consent, the impacts of the proposed development can be mitigated and/or managed to ensure the environment is protected.
5(a)(vii)	Social, economic and environmental factors have been considered in the design and location of the proposed development. A detailed impact assessment has been undertaken and best practice management of construction and operational activities will be implemented.
5(b)	The Department has assessed the proposed development in consultation with, and giving due consideration to, the technical expertise and comments provided by other Government authorities on the proposed development. This is consistent with the object of sharing the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State.
5(c)	The application was exhibited in accordance with Section 89F(1) of the EP&A Act to provide public involvement and participation in the environmental planning and assessment of this application. Community consultation was undertaken by the Applicant via community information sessions advertised through newspaper advertisements, letterbox drops, and social media.

3.10. Ecologically Sustainable Development

The EP&A Act adopts the definition of ESD within the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*. Section 6(2) of that Act states that ESD requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes, and that ESD can be achieved through the implementation of the four following principles:

- (a) *the precautionary principle;*
- (b) *inter-generational equity;*
- (c) *conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity; and*
- (d) *improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.*

The Department's assessment of the proposed development (see **Section 5**) is based on a conservative and rigorous assessment of the likely impacts, with consideration of cumulative impacts from existing and approved developments in the WSP.

The Department has considered the need to encourage the principles of ESD, in addition to the need for the proper management and conservation of natural resources, the orderly development of land, the need for the proposed development as a whole (which comprises a utility provision), and the protection of the environment including threatened species within **Section 5** of this report.

The proposed development is not anticipated to have adverse impacts upon native flora and fauna, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities and their habitats. The development requires the removal of 0.24 hectares of partly isolated, native vegetation that would be offset by the purchase and retiring of five ecosystem credits in accordance with the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy*. As such, the Department considers the proposed development would not adversely impact on the environment and is consistent with the objectives of the EP&A Act and the principles of ESD.

The Department has concluded that subject to the implementation of the recommended conditions of consent, the proposed development will not result in adverse environmental outcomes.

3.11. Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)

Under the EPBC Act, assessment and approval is required from the Commonwealth Government if a development is likely to impact on a matter of national environmental significance (MNES), as it is considered to be a 'controlled action'. The EIS for the development included a preliminary assessment of the MNES in relation to the development and concluded the development would not impact on any of these

matters, and is therefore not a 'controlled action'. As such, the Applicant considered that a referral to the Commonwealth Government was not required.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS

4.1. Consultation

The Applicant, as required by the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), undertook consultation with relevant local and State authorities as well as the community and affected landowners. The Department undertook further consultation with these stakeholders during the exhibition of the EIS and throughout the assessment of the application. These consultation activities are described in detail in the following sections.

4.1.1 Consultation by the Applicant

The Applicant undertook a range of consultation activities throughout preparation of the EIS including:

- creating a project specific website, including a feedback form to allow people to comment and register for updates;
- communicating with local and State authorities as well as special interest groups; and
- coordinating a community information session.

The Applicant noted that forty-seven people attended the community information session and the feedback received during the session was generally positive.

4.1.2 Consultation by the Department

The Department undertook a range of consultation activities throughout the preparation of the SEARs including consultation with relevant public authorities.

After accepting the DA and EIS for the application, the Department:

- made it publically available between **Monday 10 December 2015** and **Monday 8 February 2016**:
 - on the Department's website;
 - at the Department's Information Centre (Bridge Street, Sydney); and
 - at Blacktown City Council (Flushcombe Road, Blacktown);
- notified nearby landowners in the vicinity of the proposed development about the exhibition period by letter;
- notified relevant State government authorities and Blacktown City Council by letter; and
- advertised the exhibition in the Blacktown Sun and Blacktown Advocate.

A number of other meetings were convened by the Department with various stakeholders during the assessment of the proposed development. A summary of the meetings and outcomes is provided within **Table 3**.

Table 3: Summary of Department meetings throughout the assessment

	Summary	Outcomes
OEH	Discussions following exhibition of the EIS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both OEH and the Department recommended re-designing the facility to reduce the clearing of significant vegetation for the purposes of an overflow carpark. OEH had concerns regarding the calculations of the required offsets. 	Applicant revised the design of the proposed development, removing the overflow carpark and re-calculated the offsets required. OEH were comfortable with the changes and raised no further concerns with the proposed development. This is discussed within Sections 5.1 and 5.5 .
EPA	Discussions following the receipt of the RTS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA had concerns with the assessment of water quality impacts upon Eastern Creek and the modelling assumptions. 	The Applicant undertook an additional assessment of the water quality and modelling of the stormwater treatment to address matters raised by the EPA. EPA raised no further concerns with the proposed development. This is discussed further in Section 5.4
Applicant	Discussions throughout the assessment to provide additional information to the Department for consideration as part of the assessment.	The Department considered the supplementary information provided and incorporated this into its assessment.

	Summary	Outcomes
Featherdale	The Department met with Featherdale twice during the assessment in relation to the potential social and economic impacts of the proposed development upon Featherdale.	The Department considered the concerns raised regarding economic and social impact and engaged independent specialists to review the information provided. The Department's consideration of these issues is presented within Sections 5.2 and 5.3.

4.2. Submissions

The Department received 56 submissions during the exhibition period, including one submission from Blacktown City Council (Council) and ten submissions from public authorities. Forty-five submissions from the general public and other groups were received. A summary of the submissions received is provided within **Table 4**. The issues raised in submissions are discussed in further detail in **Section 4.1.4**.

Table 4: Breakdown of submissions by classification and respondent

Respondent	Support	Object	Comment	Total
Public authorities	0	0	11	11
Community Groups	0	5	0	5
Individuals	1	35	4	40
Total	1	40	15	56

Public authorities and organisations provided comments on a broad range of issues specific to their function and responsibility. Key issues raised included biodiversity and offsetting, traffic and water discharges from the proposed development.

The majority of submissions from community members, landowners and special interest groups were objections with various issues raised including biodiversity, government policy and animal welfare. A summary of the issues raised in submissions is provided within **Section 4.1.4**. Each submission is provided in full at **Appendix E**.

4.1.3 Public Authorities

The Department received 11 submissions from public authorities during the exhibition period, of which none were objections. The submissions received and the issues raised are discussed further below.

Blacktown City Council (Council) raised concerns regarding the number of accessible parking spaces, site access, fencing and heritage. Council recommended the addition of a drop-off zone and details on proposed fencing be provided. In relation to heritage, Council recommended an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) be provided and the European Heritage Study be updated.

The **Office of Environment and Heritage** (OEH) raised concerns regarding flora and fauna. Specifically, the OEH raised issues regarding consistency with the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects* and the retention of the Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW). The OEH supported the reduction of car park size and remove its footprint from the endangered ecological community (EEC) of River Flat Eucalypt Forest. The OEH provided no comments on the submitted Aboriginal heritage information.

The **Environment Protection Authority** (EPA) provided recommendations to mitigate construction impacts relating to unexpected asbestos find, waste, dust, erosion and sediment and noise impacts. Operational matters raised by the EPA related to siting and design, noise, waste management, and water quality. The EPA considered that environmental impacts during operation could be managed through responsible environmental management practices.

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) provided comments in relation to traffic control signal plans, the extension of the storage/turning lane on the Great Western Highway and the submission of vehicle swept path analysis in accordance with AUSTROADS. RMS also requested clarification regarding access arrangements for the site.

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) requested additional traffic modelling in accordance with the SEARs and requested additional information on construction and service vehicle traffic. TfNSW commented on the lack of swept path analysis at the intersection with the Great Western Highway, requesting further detail as well as information on pedestrian connections to the nearby bus stop.

The **Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Animal Welfare Unit** required the Applicant submit an application to its Department under the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986* prior to commencing operations or obtaining animals.

DPI Resources and Energy raised no concerns.

DPI Water recommended the relocation of the overflow carpark to be outside of the River Flat Eucalypt Forest EEC.

The **Taronga Conservation Society** noted the animal food storage facility and site areas do not appear to be large enough. Concerns were raised regarding Work Health and Safety (WHS), animal health and welfare and back-of-house design and operation.

Sydney Water noted that water and wastewater requirements will need to be provided as part of a Section 73 application. Sydney Water also provided confirmation for the water and wastewater connection locations.

Endeavour Energy advised that a connection of load application is required and access to electrical infrastructure must be maintained.

4.1.4 Special Interest Groups

The Department received five submissions from special interest groups during the exhibition period, of which all were objections. The groups that made submissions to the Department were:

- NSW Greens;
- Ryde Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society;
- Mulgoa Valley Landcare Group;
- Blacktown and District Environment Group Inc.; and
- Urbis on behalf of Elanor Investors Group (Elanor), owners of Featherdale Wildlife Park.

NSW Greens objected to the proposed development on environmental and animal welfare grounds. Matters raised include the leasing of the WSP to private interests, the protection of two significant plant communities, the captivity of animals for tourism purposes and anticipated Aboriginal heritage impacts.

Ryde Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society objected to the proposed development due to the loss of open space.

Mulgoa Valley Landcare Group argued the proposed development would adversely impact the natural flora and fauna of the site, particularly due to the planting of African flora species.

Blacktown and District Environment Group Inc. objected to the proposed development on the grounds the WSP should not be developed and raised concerns relating to the introduction of invasive species.

Elanor Investors Group (Elanor) objected to the proposed development as a result of the potential economic and social impacts on Featherdale Wildlife Park and subsequent impacts upon the locality including an inability to support the local community through outreach programs. Elanor highlights the application did not adequately address the economic and social impacts of the development.

4.1.5 General Public

The Department received 40 submissions from the general public during the exhibition period. Of the submissions received from individuals,

- 35 objected to the proposed development;
- one submission supported the proposed development; and
- four provided comments.

Key issues raised within the objections to the proposed development were in relation to biodiversity, development of designated 'open space' and animal welfare. Other issues raised included operational matters, siting and socio-economic concerns. The submission made in support of the application was in relation to the potential increase in tourism offerings in Western Sydney. The other issues raised in submissions received from the community were in relation to biodiversity, including offsetting and potential for weeds, pollution and the significant history of the proposed site.

An indication of the proportion of individual submissions raising particular issues is provided within **Figure 4**.

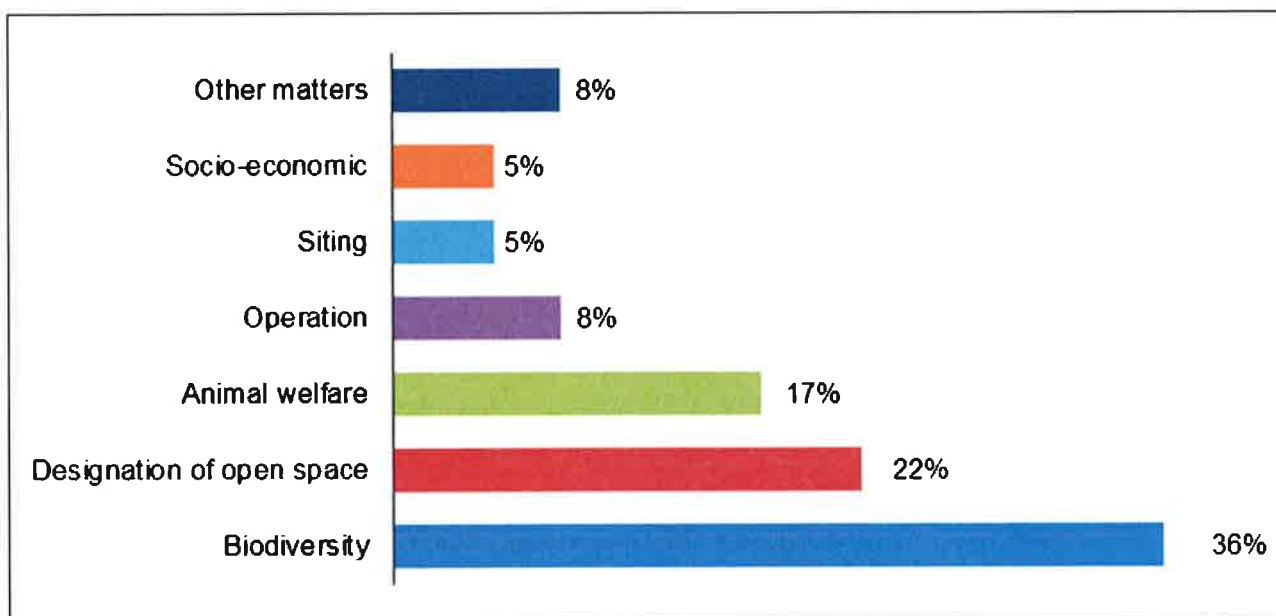


Figure 4: Key issues identified in general public submissions and the proportion of submissions that raised the issue

The Department's response to the issues raised is provided in **Table 9** in **Section 5.5**.

4.3. Response to Submissions and Supplementary Information

The Department requested the Applicant provide a Response to Submissions report (RTS) to address the issues raised in the agency, special interest groups and public submissions.

In May 2016, the Applicant provided a RTS which did not alter the scope of the proposed development, however revised the overall footprint and provided clarification on a number of matters including siting and design, traffic, biodiversity impacts and heritage. The reduced footprint of the proposed development removed the overflow car park from an area identified as River Flat Eucalypt Forest EEC. This resulted in a reduction in the overall area of protected vegetation to be removed. Additional commitments were made by the Applicant, particularly in relation to traffic management, to further monitor and manage any potential environmental impacts during operation.

As the RTS resulted in a change to the impacts of the application, the Department notified previous submitters in addition to publishing the RTS on the Department's website. The re-notification period was from Thursday 19 May 2016 until Thursday 9 June 2016. The Department received eight submissions, including submissions from the OEH, EPA, RMS and TfNSW in addition to two submissions from special interest groups and two submissions from the general public. A summary of the submissions received is provided below.

The **OEH** provided clarification on the application of the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects* (Offsets Policy) and *Framework for Biodiversity Assessment* (FBA). The OEH stated that suitable offsets would be required for the 0.24 ha of Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW) to be removed. In addition a number of other minor matters were raised, seeking clarification from Sydney Zoo. Biodiversity is discussed in further detail within **Section 5.5**.

The **EPA** raised a number of issues including the potential for adverse water quality impacts on Eastern Creek particularly during operation. EPA's key issues are discussed in further detail within **Section 5.4**.

RMS indicated that the RTS satisfactorily addressed the issues raised.

TfNSW indicated the issues raised in its submission had been addressed subject to the implementation of conditions, including both a construction and operational traffic management plan.

Urbis on behalf of Elanor provided a further submission on the RTS maintaining its objection to the proposed development in relation to the social and economic impacts upon Featherdale Wildlife Park and the locality.

The submissions from the general public and the Blacktown and District Environment Group raised similar issues to those raised during the exhibition of the EIS including biodiversity matters (impacts upon vegetation and existing fauna), impacts upon water quality, development of open space and heritage.

On 22 August 2016, a supplementary response was provided by Sydney Zoo in relation to the submissions received, focussing primarily on those issues that required additional information being economic impacts and stormwater management across the site. This information was provided to the agencies that provided comment.

The supplementary information addressed the majority of matters raised. To address the matters raised in relation to water quality and socio-economic impacts, the Department convened meetings with both the EPA and Featherdale Wildlife Park (Featherdale). The Applicant subsequently provided additional clarification on a number of matters in relation to discharges from the site and socio-economic impacts.

5. ASSESSMENT

The Department has considered the EIS, the issues raised in the submissions, and the Applicant's RTS and supplementary information in its assessment of the proposed development. The Department considers the key assessment issues are:

- traffic and access;
- social impacts upon the locality;
- economic impacts upon the locality; and
- stormwater management and drainage.

A number of other issues have also been considered. These issues are considered to be minor and are assessed in **Table 8** within **Section 5.6** of this report.

5.1. Traffic and Access

The application seeks to develop a portion of the WSP into a large-scale tourist facility. This would result in changes to traffic movements, both during construction and operation and create a significant demand for publically accessible car-parking in close proximity to the proposed development. Under the WSP POM, the area of the development is proposed as a potential tourist facility and as such, road infrastructure upgrades within the WSP have been planned by WSPT to accommodate this type of development.

GTA Consultants undertook a Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development upon traffic and access, primarily focusing on the impacts of operations and the associated increase in traffic movements on the surrounding road network.

Access

The site is located immediately north of the Great Western Highway between the M7 Motorway and west of Doonside Road (see **Figure 5**). The EIS indicates the site is afforded access from the Great Western Highway via a Parklands Access Road (see **Figure 6**).



Figure 5: Surrounding roads to the proposed development



Figure 6: Access to the proposed development

Internal roads to WSP from this intersection will be constructed by WSPT as part of the Bungarrabee Precinct, presented within the *WSP POM*. Car-parking and internal access roads within the boundary of the proposed development will be completed by the Applicant.

There is a bus stop to the east and the site is located between two railway stations (Rooty Hill – 2.7 km north-west and Doonside – 3 km north). There is minimal pedestrian connectivity to the WSP as the area is generally characterised by industrial uses and undeveloped open space. The *WSP POM* indicates that the area is anticipated to become a hub of passive recreation, tourism and cultural activities, with an extensive walking/cycling trail network.

Construction Traffic

The Applicant considered that given the site is adjacent to a major arterial road, there would be minimal impacts during the construction period. The EIS estimates construction may generate up to 10 vehicles per hour (peak) and up to 50 vehicles entering and leaving the site each day via the intersection with the Great Western Highway (via Parklands Access Road). The TIA indicates the Great Western Highway currently carries approximately 42,500 vehicles per day and the expected increase during construction would have a negligible impact on the existing road network.

While both RMS and TfNSW initially raised concerns regarding access to the site and construction vehicles generally, the Applicant provided clarifications on the site access (via Parklands Access Road) and committed to the preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan to provide additional details of how construction traffic will be managed following detailed design. Both agencies were generally satisfied with this approach, with TfNSW providing additional specifications for the plan in the submission on the RTS.

Given the close proximity of the proposed development to the surrounding arterial road network and relatively low traffic predicted during construction, it is anticipated construction would have minimal impact upon the surrounding roads. The Department supports the approach of the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan and has recommended a condition that this plan, in consultation with Council, RMS and TfNSW be developed prior to the commencement of any works at the site. The Construction Traffic Management Plan is to include detail of the measures that would be implemented to ensure minimal impacts upon the road network during construction.

Operational Traffic Movements

The TIA assumed an annual visitation of between 500,000 and 800,000 patrons, with daily visitation varying across the year. Daily visitation assumptions were outlined in three scenarios:

- peak: mid/late December to late January (summer school holiday period) and public holidays;
- shoulder: November to mid/late December and late-January to the end of February, as well as during other school holidays; and
- off-peak: March to the end of October (excluding school holidays).

Based on these scenarios, the maximum daily attendance of 8,000 visitors was modelled during the peak summer school holiday period (~16% of the year). The anticipated traffic generated in a day during the peak visitation period is summarised within **Table 5**.

Table 5: Traffic generation summary of the proposed development during peak visitation

Peak Period	Time	Entering vehicles (veh/hour)	Exiting vehicles (veh/hour)	Total Traffic Movements contributed to the road network
Weekday AM (Network Peak)	0800-0900	68	0	68
Weekday (Site Peak)	1100-1200	171	65	236
Weekday PM (network and site)	1600-1730	0	44	44
Weekend Peak (Site Peak)	1100-1200	246	94	340

These traffic movements formed the basis of the assessment of the intersection performance. The assumptions were considered to be conservative and the modelling of three differing operational scenarios presented a reasonable estimate of anticipated visitation. Neither RMS nor TfNSW raised concerns with the traffic generation scenarios.

Operational traffic movements, excluding patrons, have been estimated as follows:

- animal food deliveries - 6 vehicles per week;
- café deliveries – 2 vehicles per day;
- gift shop – 1 vehicle per week.

The operational traffic movements were considered to result in a negligible impact upon the overall road traffic network as the proportion of vehicle movements added to the network is negligible when compared to the current carrying capacity of the Great Western Highway (i.e. 42,500 vehicles per day).

Intersection Performance

The primary access to and from the site will be via the Great Western Highway/Parklands Access Road intersection (See **Figure 6**). This intersection is a 6 lane, signalised 4-way intersection with turn bays on the approach from both the east and west.

There is currently some queuing at this intersection (along Rudders Lane) during both the weekday AM and PM peaks. The TIA indicates this is due to the priority given to traffic movements along the Great Western Highway resulting in delays at the intersection currently being in excess of 60 seconds. The impact of the proposed development on the operation of this intersection was assessed using the SIDRA INTERSECTION modelling package.

Modelling was undertaken of the zoo peak arrivals times on the AM road network peak to provide a conservative estimate. Results indicated there would be an increase in queuing on all approaches. The TIA indicated there would only be a decline in Level of Service (LoS) on the approach from the west, with the LoS declining from LoS A to LoS B. A 'LoS B' is considered to have acceptable delays and spare capacity. As such, this decline in service was considered to be negligible in reference to the overall capacity of the surrounding road network and the limited period (~16% of the year) of the peak scenario. In addition, the Applicant considered that during the peak scenario, there would likely be a reduction in overall traffic on the Great Western Highway. The TIA concluded that the intersection would perform satisfactorily during the shoulder period and subsequently the off-peak period. In addition, the Applicant has commenced discussions with Busways and TfNSW to improve public transport connections to the site which will further assist in traffic management.

During the exhibition of the EIS, RMS raised a number of matters for consideration relating to potential queuing, however was satisfied with the information provided within the RTS and raised no further concerns. TfNSW requested an Operational Traffic Management Plan be developed to detail the management of traffic and transport during high visitation periods. The Department notes that there are a number of uncertainties associated with the proposed development, particularly in relation to actual visitation profiles during peak times. The Department agrees with the comments raised by TfNSW and has recommended a condition that the Applicant prepare and implement a detailed Operational Transport Management Plan (OTMP) in consultation with relevant agencies. The OTMP is to detail specific management measures that will be implemented to address potentially higher than anticipated visitation and detail management measures to be implemented to minimise any traffic impacts off-site. These measures may include specified arrival times, off-peak ticketing and the promotion of public transport.

The Department supports the recommendation of TfNSW and has recommended a condition requiring development of an OTMP in consultation with relevant agencies.

Parking

Given the nature of the proposed development, there is no guideline available to assist in car park planning. As such, the TIA assessed car parking demand based on anticipated staff and visitor numbers, assumed arrival and departure profiles, estimated vehicle occupancy and vehicle mode share targets. In addition, the EIS reviewed car parking provisions at similar venues and considered the Australian Standards for Off-street car parking (AS2890.1:2004) and Off-street commercial vehicle facilities (AS2890.2:2002). Neither RMS nor TfNSW raised issues with the assumptions utilized in undertaking the assessment.

The assessment concluded a car park with a capacity of 1,324 vehicles would be needed to accommodate the anticipated peak demand, with the requirement for some additional parking on a small number of days annually. As a result of the submissions received, including those from RMS, TfNSW and Council in addition to a detailed submission from OEHL in relation to the location of the overflow parking area within an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), the Proponent revised the parking arrangement within the RTS.

The RTS revised the number of parking spaces to 1,053 (including 18 accessible spaces), noting there would be a potential shortfall of approximately 271 spaces on peak operational days (~5% of the time). To address the shortfall, the Applicant has commenced consultation with both TfNSW and Busways to increase the number of buses servicing the proposed development, particularly on weekends.

The Department has also recommended that the OTMP detail how parking will be managed during high visitation periods. This includes a requirement for the Applicant to detail measures that would address the shortfall, which may include online booking systems with allocated visiting periods, off-peak ticketing price reductions and the promotion of public transport. In addition, the Department has recommended that a Work Place Travel Plan form part of the OTMP to promote public transport usage to the site.

Overall, the Department concludes that traffic generated by the proposed development during construction and operation can be accommodated by the existing road network and the four-way signalised intersection

of the Great Western Highway/Rudders Lane/Parklands Access Road. The Department is satisfied that for the majority of the time, there will be sufficient parking for patrons. Peak periods will be managed by the requirements of the OTMP and the measures that may be implemented to distribute visitation.

The Department's assessment concludes that the potential traffic impacts of the proposed development have been adequately assessed and can be managed through the implementation of the recommended conditions.

5.2 Social impacts

The introduction of a large scale tourism facility in Western Sydney has the potential to result in social impacts upon the broader community of NSW and the localised community of the surrounding suburbs, both positive and negative. In addition, the proposed development has the potential to impact the nearby Featherdale Wildlife Park (Featherdale), a small wildlife park within the same LGA.

The Applicant undertook an assessment of the potential social impacts of the proposed development as part of a broader socio-economic assessment. As part of the assessment, the Applicant developed a Stakeholder and Community Engagement Strategy to engage the local community, neighbours and key stakeholders. As part of the strategy, the Applicant established a project specific website, had a social media campaign and held community information sessions to provide information to interested parties and collect feedback.

The Applicant's assessment indicated that the proposed development would *'improve the sense of place for residents of Western Sydney'* and additionally, generate a *'sense of identity and pride in the neighbourhood'*.

Three submissions received from the general public raised socio-economic concerns, primarily in relation to the proximity of the proposed development to Featherdale and the subsequent impacts upon this existing facility. A detailed submission was also received on behalf of the owners of Featherdale that detailed the potential for significant social impacts upon this facility and the broader community as a result of the proposed development.

Featherdale indicated in its submission that it was established in 1972 and has evolved to be the largest exhibitor of Australian fauna in the world. Featherdale cares for the largest number of koalas in the State and is an industry leader in the medical care of the species. In addition, Featherdale states that its breeding and preservation program plays a significant role in conservation initiatives, including being the principal breeder of the endangered Tiger Quoll. Featherdale considers that the proposed development has the potential to impact upon its operations and its ability to provide these socially beneficial programs.

A supplementary assessment of the social contribution of Featherdale (prepared by Urbis on behalf of the owners of Featherdale), presents the community initiatives and social benefits of Featherdale on the wider Western Sydney community. This included details of a community outreach program, ongoing support of charities and local community groups and participation in community events across Greater Western Sydney.

The Department's Social Impact Assessment Specialist, undertook an assessment of all information provided by the Applicant and submitters to determine the potential for social impacts as a result of the proposed development.

The Department's assessment highlighted that adverse social impacts tend to be greater in close proximity to a development, whereas benefits tend to be more dispersed, indicating the importance of analysing impacts at a local scale as well as a regional scale. A core principle of social impact assessment is to consider the distribution of impacts (that is alterations to the well-being of a community), geographically and socially.

The Department acknowledges the broader social benefits of Featherdale, particularly its role in conservation and preservation of the endangered Tiger Quoll as well as its engagement with the broader Western Sydney community through its community outreach program. The Department considers the proposed development will also provide social benefits, particularly through the increase in the profile of wildlife education opportunities and other conservation initiatives, potentially participation in breeding programs, proposed by the Applicant.

To manage and mitigate adverse social impacts as a result of the proposed development, the Department's review of social impacts indicated that:

- the local community should be involved in the proposed development;
- the proposed development should be differentiated to that of Featherdale; and
- the Applicant should be encouraged to regularly engage with other tourist operators in the area, including Featherdale to develop a regional tourism offering.

These measures are reflected in the Department's recommended conditions including requirements for the Applicant to:

- identify the opportunities for the surrounding community of Bungarribee to be involved in the development either as part of decision-making, employment and/or as visitors, through a reduced entry pricing structure;
- differentiate the proposed development by requiring the exhibition of Australian native animals in conjunction with a Aboriginal Cultural Heritage experience; and
- prepare and implement a Community Engagement Plan to regularly consult and engage with the community and stakeholders on the proposed development

A key driver in encouraging the ongoing operation of the two facilities is the differentiation of the two offerings. The Applicant indicated they would differentiate the proposed development by offering an Aboriginal cultural heritage experience. The Department was supportive of this and recommended a condition that the exhibition of Australian native animals be included as part of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage experience and that this be restricted to less than 1.6 ha of the exhibited animal area.

The Department has recommended the Applicant demonstrate it has made genuine and reasonable attempts to consult with relevant facilities and businesses to enhance the regional tourism of Western Sydney and outline the initiatives that will be implemented to enhance the ongoing operation of the proposed development, whilst enabling other local recreational facilities and businesses to continue operations.

Overall the Department's assessment concludes there will be positive contributions to the locality, however where there is potential for adverse impacts, these will be mitigated through the implementation of an engagement plan, in addition to differentiating the offerings of the facilities.

5.3 Economic impacts

The application proposes to introduce a new large-scale tourism facility in Western Sydney which has the potential to result in both positive and negative economic impacts upon nearby facilities, including the nearby Featherdale Wildlife Park (Featherdale).

An Economic Impact Assessment of the construction and operation of the proposed development, prepared by KPMG, was provided as part of the EIS. The assessment notes the development will cost over \$28 million and provide valuable job opportunities during construction and operation. Once operational, the assessment expects an annual visitation of 500,000 to 800,000 people and a subsequent economic contribution to the NSW economy. These assumptions were based on a study undertaken by Applied Economics (2005) on the economic contribution of similar offerings (Taronga Zoo and Western Plains Zoo) to NSW.

The EIS highlighted the differences between the proposed development and the nearby offerings in conjunction with the growing population of Western Sydney. In addition, the EIS presented the growth in household expenditure on arts, culture and recreational activities between 2000 and 2015. The assessment concluded there would be sufficient scope within the tourist market to enable the introduction of a new facility that could operate in conjunction with existing nearby facilities.

Featherdale maintained its objection to the proposed development on the basis it would cause significant negative impacts through reduced patron numbers and a subsequent reduction in the economic viability of the operation. The Department met with the owners of Featherdale to discuss their concerns.

In its RTS, the Applicant considered the proposed development would differ from the current offerings in Western Sydney, particularly Featherdale, as it includes the exhibition of a wide range of international species in safari-like setting with a lesser focus on Australian native animals. The differences between the offerings, as described by Sydney Zoo, is summarised in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Differences between the offerings of Featherdale Wildlife Park and Sydney Zoo

	Sydney Zoo	Featherdale Wildlife Park
Facility Type	Zoological facility	Wildlife Park
Area	16.5 hectares	3.1 hectares
Visitation Time (Approx.)	3-4 hours	1+ hours
Parking	1,053 spaces	60 spaces + small overflow
Animal Origin	International	Australia Only
Restaurant	Yes	No
Kiosks	2	1
Educational Amphitheatre	Yes	No
Quarantine Facility	Yes	No
Aquarium	Yes – fish and sharks	No
Reptile and Nocturnal House	Yes	Yes
Insectarium	Yes	No
Aviaries	No	Yes – 70% of animal collection is birds
Australian Animals (smaller marsupials and mammals)	Yes – integrated with Aboriginal cultural experience (less than 1.5 hectares (less than 10%))	Yes – focus on petting and “up-close” experiences
Exotic Animals - Primates, Big Cats, Other large animals	Yes	No

The Department engaged HillPDA to undertake an independent assessment of the application to determine the potential for an economic impact on Featherdale as a result of the proposed development. In undertaking this assessment, HillPDA considered *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, Section 79C of the EP&A Act and the draft *State Environmental Planning Policy (Competition) (2010)* (Draft SEPP (Competition)) in identifying matters for consideration when determining economic impacts.

The review concluded there would be sufficient population in Greater Sydney to sustain both facilities. Under Section 79C(1)(b) of the EP&A Act the Department is to consider “the likely impacts of (that) development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality”. If Featherdale’s operations were to be impacted by the operation of the Sydney Zoo, it would be unlikely the result of an ‘economic impact in the locality’. The findings note that in the circumstance where Featherdale is unable to remain viable as a result of Sydney Zoo, this is likely a result of competition rather than economic impact upon the locality.

The principles of the Draft SEPP (Competition), state that a consent authority is not to take into consideration the commercial viability of a proposed development nor the commercial viability of other businesses *unless* the proposed development is likely to have an overall impact on the extent and adequacy of local community services and facilities. Given the proposed development would unlikely result in an economic impact that would reduce the adequacy of local community services or facilities, the HillPDA review concluded there would be no economic impact upon the locality that could not be mitigated by the Sydney Zoo.

The Department’s assessment considered the input provided within submissions from Featherdale as well as the information provided from the Applicant and within the HillPDA review. The Department acknowledges the economic benefits of the operation of Featherdale as well as the potential economic benefits, locally and broadly through increased tourism. The Department notes the HillPDA review indicates there would be sufficient demand across wider Sydney to sustain both facilities, however the

HillPDA review infers that if the experiences are differentiated, there may be an opportunity for the facilities to capitalise on each other.

To minimise and manage the economic impacts of the proposed development, the Department has recommended conditions that require the Applicant to:

- detail how the proposed development will differ from existing recreational facilities and businesses;
- undertake ongoing engagement with identified key stakeholders and community members (including a commitment to face-to-face meetings at least four times per year); and
- provide initiatives that will be implemented to encourage and enhance the continued operation of the proposed development in conjunction with existing local recreational facilities and businesses.

The Department concludes that where there is an impact from the proposed development on other facilities, this is likely to be as a result of competition rather than an economic impact upon the locality. The Department considers that both Sydney Zoo and Featherdale should seek to work in a complementary manner rather than as competitors to boost the tourism offering of Western Sydney, potentially resulting in an increase in economic contribution to the region. The Department's recommended conditions that encourage differentiation between the facilities and ongoing consultation with each other to develop a regional tourism offering will help to deliver this.

5.4 Stormwater and Drainage

Both the construction and operation of the proposed development have the potential to alter stormwater flows at the site, in addition to altering the water quality within these water streams. The quality of water running off the site, particularly as a result of composting on-site and the re-use of stormwater, has the potential to impact upon downstream catchments and water bodies if not mitigated by adequate stormwater management.

Lindsay Dynan Consulting Engineers undertook an assessment of stormwater and drainage for the proposed development in accordance with the stormwater management requirements outlined by Council in its Development Control Plan (DCP).

Construction

During construction, the Applicant proposes two sedimentation basins, in addition to perimeter silt fencing and stabilised site access for vehicle movements. Construction staging has not yet been confirmed and as such, the Applicant has indicated that further information in relation the basins and discharges will be provided as part of the detailed design phase. The EPA noted the potential adverse water quality impacts of the proposed development, however primarily focused its comments on the operational phase, not raising specific concerns regarding the proposed sedimentation basins during construction.

The Department considers that construction discharges are manageable with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. The Department recommended a condition that the Applicant implement a water quality monitoring program to validate the performance of the stormwater management system, in consultation with EPA. The Department concludes the impacts of construction upon receiving water bodies are manageable with the implementation of the recommended conditions.

Operational Pollution Reduction

A number of water treatment devices are proposed throughout the site, including grassy buffers and swales, bio-retention basins, oil and water separators and stormwater harvesting ponds. The Applicant undertook modelling of the pollutant reduction capacity of these devices utilising the pollutant loading assumptions (pollutant nodes) associated with agricultural uses presented within the Council DCP.

Council accepted the modelling approach, however indicated the capacity of the hydrocarbon removal units as modelled, would need to be increased. The EPA raised a number of concerns regarding the use of the Council pollutant nodes for agricultural uses in representing the nutrient and sediment generation rates for run-off from animal enclosures, including the use of manure on site.

In acknowledging the issues raised by both Council and the EPA, the Applicant undertook additional modelling and water quality assessment as part of the RTS and supplementary information provided following the RTS. The supplementary information indicated the Applicant would adopt Council's preferences in relation to hydrocarbon treatment in the final design. To address the matters raised by the EPA, the Applicant indicated there was no specific suitable node for the modelling of run-off from a zoo and that the closest match was considered to be the agricultural node. In addition, the Applicant undertook re-

modelling of the water treatment to more accurately reflect the design of the water treatments devices (including grassy buffers and swales, bio-retention basins and oil and water separators) in series as a treatment train rather than as each treatment device in isolation.

Results of the modelling indicated the pollution reduction targets within the Council DCP would be comfortably met with the implementation of the proposed stormwater treatment devices in series. A summary of the modelled stormwater treatment achieved by the stormwater treatment train is presented within **Table 7**.

Table 7: Predicted pollutant reduction with proposed stormwater treatment system

Pollutant	Reduction Target (%) Council DCP	Modelled Reduction (%) during operation
Gross Pollutants	90	100
Total Suspended Solids	85	97.1
Total Phosphorous	65	85.7
Total Nitrogen	45	79.6
Total Hydrocarbons	90	Not captured within modelling software package MUSIC, however the Applicant indicated it would adopt Council preferences for treatment devices in final design.

Modelling concluded the proposed treatment train could effectively reduce the pollutants beyond the pollutant reduction requirements of Council. The EPA did not raise concern with the re-modelled stormwater treatment train, however acknowledged the uncertainty associated with the run-off generated from a zoo. To address this uncertainty, the EPA requested operational water quality monitoring be undertaken to validate the assumptions made with additional treatment measures being installed in the event of an increase in pollutant load. The Department agrees with the recommendation of the EPA and has recommended a condition requiring the Applicant to implement a water quality monitoring program throughout construction and operation of the proposed development. The monitoring program is to include a protocol detailing the remedial action/s that will be undertaken in the event that satisfactory treatment performance has not been achieved.

Receiving waters

The proposed development proposes three on-site detention storage basins at the end of the treatment trains throughout the site. Each basin has a separate discharge location – one to the west of the site draining to Eastern Creek, one to the north-east to a proposed easement, and one to the south-east, to the future access road. Results of modelling undertaken across the site showed the discharge concentrations from each of the basins would be either at or below the accepted guidelines, or below the existing background levels in Eastern Creek.

The EPA raised concerns in relation to the potential impact of the discharges off-site to Eastern Creek, particularly considering the uncertainty associated with run-off from animal enclosures and the use of manure around the site. In addition, the EPA identified the Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council (ANZECC) *Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality 2000* as the appropriate guideline to establish water quality objectives, rather than the Healthy Rivers Commission document referenced in the RTS.

In acknowledging the concerns of the EPA, the Applicant proposes to undertake ongoing water quality monitoring. This monitoring will identify the effectiveness of the stormwater treatment train to ensure that water quality discharges from the site meet relevant ANZECC *Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality 2000* trigger values. In addition, the Applicant highlighted that the re-use of stormwater across areas of the site and manure would be monitored and managed to ensure negligible impact on any

discharges from the proposed development. In the event that assumptions and modelling results were unrepresentative, the Applicant would consider discontinuing this reuse.

The EPA was satisfied with the additional information provided and the ongoing monitoring approach. The EPA indicated that sampling must continue until results indicate discharges from the site will have a negligible impact upon receiving waters. The Department supported this approach and accordingly specified the requirements of the water quality monitoring program, stipulating the validation role of the EPA.

The Department is satisfied water discharging from the proposed development can be managed to result in negligible environmental impacts. To address the uncertainties associated with the operation of a zoo including the pollutants associated with run-off from animal enclosures, the Department has concluded that the implementation of a frequent sampling and monitoring regime will enable any un-anticipated issues to be identified and managed prior to impacts off-site.

5.5 Other Issues

A number of other assessment issues were identified in the EIS. These issues are considered to be minor in nature and are assessed at **Table 8** below.

Table 8: Assessment of Other Issues

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EIS included a Biodiversity Report prepared by EcoLogical. The assessment of the impacts was undertaken in accordance with NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects (Biodiversity Offsets Policy) and the Framework for Biodiversity Assessment (FBA). • The assessment concluded that the proposed zoo would result in the clearing of Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC) as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – removal of 1.07 ha Shale Plains Woodland, comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 0.24 ha of Cumberland Plain Woodland; and – 0.83 ha of derived native grassland; and – removal of 0.58 ha River Flat Eucalypt Forest. • During the exhibition of the EIS, a number of submissions objected to the ecological impacts of the proposed development with the OEH raising a number of specific issues, particularly in relation to the application of the Biodiversity Offset Policy and the quantity of credits required to offset the impacts upon ecological assets. • To address the concerns raised in submissions, the Applicant modified its overflow carpark design to reduce the footprint and amount of significant vegetation (River Flat Eucalypt Forest) to be cleared. • Following consultation with the OEH, the RTS included a revised calculation of offsets and determined that 5 credits would be required to offset the impacts upon Shale Plains Woodland. • The OEH confirmed it was satisfied with the revised calculation and provided further comments on the Cumberland Plain Woodland Plan of Management, to be implemented for the retained vegetation in perpetuity. • As discussed in Section 5.1, the reduced overflow carpark may result in a small shortfall in car spaces on rare days (estimated to be about 5% of the year). The Department considers it to be an improved environmental outcome to reduce the impact on an EEC. • The Department considers the ecological assessment satisfies the requirements of relevant guidelines and policies and has recommended conditions to ensure ongoing protection of the retained Cumberland Plan Woodland, in perpetuity. • The Department's assessment concludes the implementation of the recommended conditions would mitigate impacts upon EEC's as a result of the proposed 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchase and retire five biodiversity credits prior to the commencement of the clearing of any EEC at the site; and • develop a Cumberland Plain Woodland Plan of Management in consultation with OEH to ensure the remaining stands of Cumberland Plain Woodland are appropriately protected and managed in perpetuity.

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
Animal Welfare	<p>development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant proportion of the objections from the general public raised animal welfare concerns, including disease management and biosecurity. • During the exhibition of the EIS, the Department consulted with the Department of Industry – Animal Welfare Unit (DPI AWU). DPI AWU noted the Applicant would need to obtain relevant permits and approvals from DPI AWU prior to obtaining animals and operating the facility. • The Applicant committed to complying with relevant Acts and Regulations prior to the acquisition of any animal. • The Applicant has also committed to having an 'Animal Welfare Policy' that would be implemented during operations. • The Department has reviewed the Applicant's commitments, in addition to the comments received from the general public and DPI AWU. • Noting the objections raised by the general public (11 submissions, approximately 17%), the Department has recommended a condition that the Applicant comply with all relevant guidelines, including but not limited to the <i>National Zoo Biosecurity Manual, 2011</i>, to ensure exceptional standards for animal welfare are met and maintained throughout the life of the proposed development. The <i>National Zoo Biosecurity Manual, 2011</i> was developed through a cooperative initiative between the Zoo and Aquarium Association, the Australian Wildlife Health Network, the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Australian Zoo Industry. • The Department's assessment concludes that compliance with the relevant requirements of DPI AWU, Acts, Regulations and the <i>National Zoo Biosecurity Manual, 2011</i> will adequately address animal welfare concerns associated with the proposed development. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with the <i>Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986</i>, <i>Exhibited Animal Protection Regulation 2010</i>, <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i> and <i>National Zoo Biosecurity Manual, 2011</i>; • obtain all relevant approvals and design all exhibits in consultation with DPI AWU; and • ensure exceptional standards of animal welfare are met by implementing best practice animal management.
Aboriginal Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EIS included an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study (ACHS), prepared by Artefact Heritage which included a detailed an assessment of the site. The assessment indicated that most areas of the site had been disturbed from previous uses. • The ACHS recommended further investigation of Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD 2) located central to the site, an area that had unconfirmed significance, through an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), in consultation with local indigenous groups. • Council recommended the ACHAR be completed and form part of the application, in addition to recommending a number of conditions in relation to Aboriginal heritage. • To address agency comments, the Applicant provided the methodology for the archaeological test excavations at the site as part of the RTS and committed to develop an Aboriginal heritage and cultural experience component as part of the proposed development. • The Department has considered the findings of the ACHS and additional information provided within the RTS and supplementary information and agrees with Council in relation to the importance of appropriate investigation and conservation of Aboriginal heritage (if required). • The Department acknowledges the efforts of the Applicant in relation to creating an Aboriginal heritage and cultural experience, however considers this has not been sufficiently developed. As such, the Department has recommended a number of conditions to ensure the site's Aboriginal cultural heritage is appropriately developed. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an Aboriginal Cultural Experience to be presented in conjunction with the display of Australian native animals; • collaborate with Registered Aboriginal Parties and relevant organisations to ensure that Aboriginal heritage is appropriately managed; and • develop and implement an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) prior to the commencement of construction.

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
Non-Indigenous Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department's assessment concludes the recommended conditions will ensure that an Indigenous Heritage will be appropriately managed. • The EIS included a Non-Aboriginal Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI), prepared by Artefact Heritage which found there were no listed heritage items in the area of the proposed development and nil to low potential for archaeological relics associated with historical non-indigenous uses of the site. • Council requested additional consideration of the previous uses of the site, given there would likely have been substantial activity in the area in the Colonial era. • To address the comments raised by Council and public submissions, the Applicant revised the SoHI and recommended that a Heritage Interpretation Plan be prepared to include the acknowledgment of historical uses and how this would be incorporated into the proposed development. • The revised SoHI also included a procedure for unexpected finds and a heritage induction prior to the commencement of construction. • The Department considered the findings of the revised SoHI and comments received from Council and from individuals. • The Department accepts there is a low likelihood of Non-Indigenous relics being uncovered during construction, however supports the preparation of a Heritage Interpretation Plan to acknowledge the previous uses of the site. • The Department's assessment concludes the impacts upon Non-Aboriginal heritage are unlikely and can be managed through the recommended conditions. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, in consultation with key agencies, and implement a Heritage Interpretation Plan to acknowledge the non-indigenous heritage at the site; and • procedures in the event that unidentified finds are encountered during construction.
Erosion and sediment control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of the proposed development requires the importation of 4,500m³ of fill to the site. The Applicant states this will be virgin excavated natural material (VENM) or excavated natural material (ENM) that complies with the EPA's specifications. • The Applicant proposes to implement standard erosion and sediment control measures to ensure there are no adverse water quality impacts during the construction and operational phases of the development. • The Department has reviewed the erosion and sediment control measures in conjunction with submissions received from Council and the EPA. • The Department has recommended a condition to ensure all material brought to the site is VENM which complies with EPA's requirements. • The Department's assessment concludes that erosion and sedimentation impacts from the proposed development can be managed with the implementation of the recommended conditions. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure any imported material meets EPA's <i>Excavated Natural Material Order 2014</i>, under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014</i>; and • comply with the relevant requirements of <i>Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Guideline</i>.
Noise Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, prepared by Wilkinson Murray Pty Ltd., was submitted with the EIS. • A number of submissions raised concerns about noise from animals, particularly in the evening. • The Applicant's assessment found that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the predicted levels of operational, road and construction noise comply with established goals of the <i>NSW Industrial Noise Policy</i>, <i>NSW Road Noise Policy</i> and the EPA's <i>Interim Construction Noise Guideline</i> at all nearby receivers; - the night time noise levels due to roaring lions is well below established sleep disturbance screening levels; and 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement best management practice, including all reasonable and feasible measures to prevent and minimise noise during construction and operation.

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the cumulative noise levels due to the development and existing industrial sources are predicted to comply at all receivers. • No issues were raised by the EPA with regards to the Applicant's noise assessment. • The Department has reviewed the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment and has recommended conditions requiring the Applicant to comply with specific operational noise limits and the construction noise management levels detailed within the <i>Interim Construction Noise Guideline</i>. • The Department's assessment concludes that compliance with the Department's recommended conditions would adequately manage any noise impacts associated with the proposed development. 	
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA), prepared by Wilkinson Murray Pty Ltd., was included in the EIS. The AQIA considered the potential odour, dust and particulate emissions from the proposed development during construction and operation. • The AQIA identified the key pollutants associated with the development are dust (during construction) and odour (during operation). • Dust (during construction) and odour (during operation) would unlikely have an impact upon the air quality in the immediate surroundings (or at the closest sensitive receiver approximately 250 m from the proposed development). The Applicant has provided commitments to ensure air quality impacts are appropriately managed to ensure negligible off-site impacts upon receivers. • The Department has reviewed the AQIA and agrees that odour impacts would unlikely be detectable at sensitive receivers. The Department considers that dust impacts associated with the proposed development are manageable, and these management measures should be detailed within both the Construction and Operational Environmental Management Plans. • The Department's assessment concludes air quality impacts would be minimal and can be managed with the implementation of the Applicant's commitments and appropriate management methods. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include a Construction Air Quality Management Plan within the CEMP and an Operational Air Quality Management Plan within the OEMP.
Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant advises the proposed development will use some hazardous materials during its operation, however these will not be stored in quantities that exceed thresholds stipulated under <i>State Environmental Planning Policy No.33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development (SEPP 33)</i> and therefore would not constitute a potentially hazardous or potentially offensive industry. • The Department accepts the Applicant's position. To ensure all chemicals, fuels and oils used are handled appropriately, the Department has recommended a condition requiring that they are stored in appropriately bunded areas in accordance with the requirements of relevant Australian Standards, and the EPA's <i>Storing and Handling of Liquids: Environmental Protection - Participants Handbook</i>. • With the implementation of the recommended conditions, the Department's assessment concludes that dangerous goods and hazardous substances would result in negligible environmental impacts. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantities of dangerous goods do not exceed thresholds outlined in <i>Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines – Applying SEPP 33</i>; and • any chemicals, fuels and oils used on-site are handled in accordance with all relevant standards and guidelines.
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A waste assessment and Waste Management Plan, prepared by SLR Consulting, was included in the EIS. The assessment includes detail of the potential waste streams generated during the construction and operational phases of the development. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise the Waste Management Plan to include detail of on-site composting and details of measures to be implemented to minimise

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste streams during construction include excavation materials, green waste, plant maintenance waste, packaging materials and wastewater. Waste streams during operations include general wastes, food organics, animal wastes, packaging, office wastes, and store, plant and general maintenance wastes. The Waste Management Plan identifies opportunities for waste avoidance, re-use and recycling and options for storage and disposal of waste. The Department has reviewed the Applicant's waste assessment and Waste Management Plan and is satisfied they provide a reasonable estimate of the waste products generated on-site, and incorporate best practice measures to minimise and manage waste over the life of the development. The Department, in consultation with the EPA, has concluded operational waste reuse will require further consideration (i.e. on-site composting and reuse). This is because the impact of reuse leaching into water flows around the site and the off-site impact is presently unconfirmed. The Department has recommended conditions to ensure the Waste Management Plan is revised to include details of a monitoring program to ensure composting does not have a negative impact upon the environment, on-site or off-site. The Department's assessment concludes that with the implementation of the Waste Management Plan and validation of the water quality results by the EPA (see Section 5.4) the potential impacts of the proposed development can be effectively managed. 	<p>leachate generation and pollution on-site or off-site.</p>
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Signage and Wayfinding Assessment, prepared by Urban & Public, was submitted with the SSD application and includes a navigational and signage placement plan. Council did not raise specific comments on the strategy as it applied to navigational signage visible within the proposed development, rather than from the public domain. The Department has reviewed the signage documentation and concluded the proposed signage is unlikely to have a significant impact as it is only visible from within the proposed development. The Department recommends a strategy be developed in consultation with relevant agencies and Council to provide further information regarding signage that is visible from outside the proposed development. The Department's assessment concludes that in the event signage is required to be visible outside of the proposed development site, seeking agency input would ensure the design of signs would minimise adverse impacts upon the public domain. 	<p>Require the Applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a signage strategy prior to the installation of any signs visible from the public domain in consultation with Council, RMS and the WSPT.
Government Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fourteen (22%) of objecting submissions from the general public raised concerns with the WSP being used for private development. The Applicant advises that WSP POM was developed through stakeholder and community engagement and adopted by the Minister for Western Sydney following public exhibition and consultation. The WSP POM includes the strategic directions for the WSP which includes the promotion of the WSP as a visitor and tourist destination. The plan aims to achieve this goal through providing various opportunities for tourists to visit and enjoy the WSP. The plan allocates five (5) percent of the WSP to passive recreation with one (1) percent of the Western Sydney Parklands for tourism uses. 	<p>No recommendations are considered necessary.</p>

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department has considered the WSP POM and the 2014 Western Sydney Parklands Plan of Management Supplement. The Department's assessment concludes that the proposed development would assist in achieving the objectives of the WSP POM 	

5.6 Consideration of key issues raised in public submissions

Table 9 presents the key issues raised in the public submissions (as summarised in **Section 4.1.5**), and how the Department has considered each issue.

Table 9: Department's response to issues raised in submissions from the general public

Concerns raised	Department comments
Flora and fauna – clearing of Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC), indirect effects upon retained areas of EEC and the introduction of noxious weeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EIS for the proposed development requested a large overflow carpark within an area of an Endangered Ecological Community and the introduction of weed species as part of the African Woodlands exhibit area. The Applicant subsequently removed the overflow carpark that was located within the EEC area and confirmed that noxious weeds would not be planted as part of the African Woodlands exhibit and would include management of existing weeds onsite. Other direct impacts upon EEC's will be mitigated through the Department's condition that the Applicant purchase and retire FIVE ecosystem credits. Indirect impacts upon the retained areas of EEC will be managed as a result of the Department's recommendation to implement a Cumberland Plain Woodland Plan of Management in perpetuity (See Section 5.5).
Government Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department has considered the objections raised in relation to the development of WSP for a privately owned tourist facility. The Department has considered the WSP POM and the POM Supplement which includes the strategic direction of the WSP to be promoted as a visitor and tourist destination. The WSP POM aims to achieve this goal through providing various opportunities for tourists to visit and enjoy the WSP. The Department considers that the use of the site for the proposed development is in accordance with the Plan (Section 5.5).
Animal welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department notes the concerns in relation to animal welfare with regards to exhibiting animals in captivity. To ensure exceptional standards of animal welfare are met and maintained, the Applicant has committed to developing and Animal Welfare Policy and is required to comply with the <i>Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986</i>, <i>Exhibited Animal Protection Regulation 2010</i>, and the <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i>. Improved animal welfare standards will be achieved through the Department's recommended condition that the Applicant ensure exceptional standards of animal welfare are met and exhibits designed in consultation with DPI AWU (See Section 5.5).
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department has assessed the proposed development on its merits, having regard to the impacts of operations including potential noise and air quality impacts upon the environment and surrounding community. The Department's assessment recommends a number of conditions to minimise and mitigate these impacts of the operation of a large-scale facility upon the environment and the community (Section 5).
Siting and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns raised with regards to the siting of the proposed development were considered by the Department as part of its assessment of Government Policy (WSP POM) (Section 5.5), traffic flows and parking (Section 5.1). The Department's assessment concluded that the site would be appropriate for the proposed use and impacts could be managed through the recommended conditions.
Socio-economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some submissions raised concerns with regards to the proposed development upon the nearby Featherdale Wildlife Park. The Department undertook a detailed assessment of the potential social impacts and engaged HillPDA to undertake a review of the potential economic impacts. The Department's assessment concluded that whilst the proposed development will not result in an economic impact, there is the potential for social impacts in the locality. Consequently, the Department has recommended conditions that the Applicant work in a complementary manner to Featherdale with increase the tourist offering

Concerns raised	Department comments
	for Western Sydney and differentiate the offering to that of Featherdale. (Sections 5.2 and 5.3).

6 CONCLUSION

The Department's assessment of the application has fully considered all relevant matters under Section 79C of the EP&A Act, the objects of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

The Department's assessment concluded there would be some ecological impacts through the loss of vegetation and the potential for impacts upon water quality as a result of the proposed development. Therefore, the Department has recommended a number of conditions to minimise these impacts, including:

- the purchase and retiring of biodiversity credits to offset the impacts upon EEC's;
- implementation of a Cumberland Plain Woodland Plan of Management to ensure the vegetation that is to be retained is appropriately conserved and managed in perpetuity; and
- an intensive water quality monitoring program to monitor the impact on Eastern Creek and other receiving water bodies and details of contingencies in the event that impacts are detected.

In considering the potential social and economic issues raised by Featherdale Wildlife Park, detailed assessments were undertaken of these issues. The Department concluded that whilst the proposed development is unlikely to result in an economic impact, the Department considers there is potential for social impacts in the locality. As such, the Department has recommended a number of conditions to mitigate and minimise these impacts including a condition that the Applicant work with Featherdale to provide complimentary tourist offerings to Western Sydney.

The Department recognises the *Parklands Plan of Management 2020* and acknowledges the proposed development would work towards achieving the goals of this plan.

The Department concludes that the impacts of the development can be appropriately managed through implementation of the recommended conditions of consent. Consequently, the Department considers the development should be approved subject to conditions.

7 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Assessment Commission:

- **consider** the findings and recommendations of this report;
- **approve** the development application under Section 89E of the EP&A Act; and
- **sign** the attached instrument of consent (refer **Appendix A**).


Chris Ritchie 22/11/16
Director
Industry Assessments


Anthea Sargeant 22/11/16
Executive Director
Key Sites and Industry Assessments