

Chapter 7

Justification of amended project and conclusion



7 Justification of amended project and conclusion

7.1 Statutory context summary

The Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 project is critical State significant infrastructure and is subject to assessment and approval in accordance with Part 5, Division 5.2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

An EIS was prepared to address the requirements of Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act, the SEARs and Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021. The EIS was placed on public exhibition by the Department of Planning and Environment between 9 November 2022 and 16 December 2022, and submissions were invited.

Following exhibition of the EIS, Transport refined the reference design for the project. As described in this report, a number of amendments are proposed to minimise the impacts of the project. This Amendment Report has been prepared to describe and assess the potential impacts of the amended project and to identify how those impacts would be managed and mitigated.

A separate Response to Submissions has been prepared that includes consideration of the issues raised by the community and government agencies in their submissions and agency advice. The proposed amendments relate to and address some of the issues raised within submissions and during consultation, including the potential for property and biodiversity impacts. A description of, and justification for, the proposed amendments is provided in Chapter 4 (Description of the amendments) of this report.

7.2 Strategic context and justification summary

Information about the need for, and justification of, the project as part of Parramatta Light Rail is provided in Chapter 3 (Strategic context and need) of the EIS. Chapter 24 (Justification and conclusion) of the EIS provides the justification for the project in accordance with the requirements of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.

The changes to potential impacts associated with the proposed amendments compared to those described in the EIS are considered in Chapter 6 (Additional environmental assessment) of this report.

Considering the proposed changes in the context of the strategic need for the project (considered in Chapter 3 of the EIS and summarised in Chapter 3 (Strategic context and need) of this report) and justification in Chapter 24 of the EIS, there is not considered to be any change to the overall justification and strategic merit of the project in the context of Parramatta Light Rail as a whole.

The proposed amendments and refinements described this report, issues raised in agency and community submissions and advice from NSW Government agencies, and responses to the issues raised (provided in the separate Response to Submissions), do not change the justification of the project as outlined in the EIS.

In summary, the project, as part of Parramatta Light Rail, is needed to respond to growth in Sydney's Central River City and provide necessary public transport infrastructure to achieve the NSW Government's vision for the Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula area (GPOP) to become the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney.

The project would connect Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 and Parramatta's CBD to Sydney Olympic Park via Camellia, Ermington, Melrose Park and Wentworth Point. It would link communities north and south of the Parramatta River to the Parramatta CBD, the Camellia town centre, and the sport, entertainment, education and employment hub at Sydney Olympic Park.

The project would provide improved public transport capacity to service existing land uses and proposed urban renewal and development areas, in line with the *Central City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018b), *City Plan 2036* (City of Parramatta, 2020), *Camellia-Rosehill Place Strategy* (DPIE, 2022), *Melrose Park Northern Structure Plan* (City of Parramatta, 2016), *Melrose Park Southern Structure Plan* (City of Parramatta, 2019), and the *Carter Street Precinct Development Framework* (DPIE, 2020).

The project would complete the development of Parramatta Light Rail, in accordance with the above strategies. The project would ensure people and places in Sydney's Central River City are connected by an effective, integrated transport network, which is fundamental to supporting growth – providing access to jobs, housing, education, cultural attractions, recreation activities and business interactions.

The project would also support urban renewal and placemaking, particularly in areas north of the river such as Rydalmere, Ermington and Melrose Park where existing open space would be refurbished and new and improved open spaces provided, including for active and passive recreational activities.

The project is considered to be justified for the following reasons:

- potential environmental and socio-economic impacts have been avoided and minimised as far as is reasonable and feasible, measures to manage the potential for impacts have been developed, and appropriate consideration has been given to the potential for biophysical, economic and social impacts, and the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- the Parramatta Light Rail network, including the project, is central to achieving the GPOP vision – together with Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1, the project would deliver long term transport, economic and social benefits to the Central River City and GPOP
- there is a demonstrated strategic need for the project, which is consistent with relevant strategic plans and policies at the metropolitan, district and local levels
- the project achieves the objectives for Parramatta Light Rail.

Although constructing and operating the project would result in some impacts, with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures, and in the context of the project's need and benefits, the potential impacts are considered acceptable.

7.3 Consideration of impacts

The project alignment, design and construction methodology have been developed to avoid and minimise impacts on the local and regional environment, and impacts on the local community and businesses, as far as possible. A project of this scale would inevitably have some impacts on the local environment and community, particularly during construction. The EIS was prepared to assess the potential impacts of the project and develop measures to mitigate the impacts and enhance the benefits of the project. This Amendment Report was prepared to describe and assess the proposed amendments to the project.

Although the proposed amendments would result in some potential additional impacts compared to the exhibited project, the proposed amendments overall would result in reduced impacts or overall benefits when compared to those assessed in the EIS. The changes to impacts associated with the proposed amendments compared to those described in the EIS are described in Chapter 6 (Additional environmental assessment) of this report, and would largely include:

- Transport and traffic – increased impacts (including partial and full closures) during construction of the bridge at Hill Road, reduction in construction and operational traffic related impacts at Camellia, minor redistribution of local traffic in Rydalmere during operation, and reduced impacts associated with the closure of Rydalmere Wharf and the car park during construction and operation.
- Noise and vibration – reduction in the numbers of receivers impacted by sleep disturbance and vibration impacts during construction, increase in the numbers of receivers predicted to exceed the construction noise management levels (it is noted that this is largely due to the revised modelling approach rather than the amendments), and a minor increase in the number of receivers qualifying for mitigation from operational groundborne noise.
- Heritage – avoidance of impacts on potential areas of Aboriginal archaeological sensitivity in Melrose Park and identified historical archaeological management units of potential State significance at Camellia and Melrose Park.
- Land use and property – reduction in total number of properties that would be affected by the project’s land requirements, increase in the total area of Eric Primrose Reserve and Archer Park required as part of the project’s operational footprint, residential properties at the end of Wharf Road, Melrose Park (now able to be retained as a result of the amendment to the bridge between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point) would experience changes in amenity.
- Socio-economic impacts – reduction of impacts on businesses in Camellia, including access and connectivity impacts.
- Visual impacts – three new viewpoints in Wharf Road are expected to experience high to moderate impacts during construction and operation, reduction in the number of trees that would need to be removed.
- Biodiversity – reduction in areas of native vegetation and planted vegetation impacted by the project, and avoidance of direct impacts on existing ponds at Narawang Wetland.
- Flooding – increase in flooding impacts in parts of Camellia and Rydalmere associated with the amended Camellia foreshore to Rydalmere alignment and bridge; however, Transport has undertaken further preliminary modelling that has confirmed the ability to comply with the project’s flood management objectives.

Measures to minimise the identified potential impacts would be implemented during the design development, construction planning and operation phases, taking into account the input of stakeholders and the local community. The mitigation measures identified in the EIS have been updated to respond to the issues raised in submissions and during ongoing engagement with the community and key stakeholders, and to take in account additional work since the EIS was exhibited, including what was done to assess the impacts of the proposed amendments.

To manage the potential impacts identified by the EIS, and in some cases remove them completely, the updated mitigation measures (see Appendix B (Updated mitigation measures) of this report) would be implemented during design, construction and operation. The majority of the potential construction related impacts would be effectively mitigated by the implementation of best practice construction management, including the implementation of the environmental management approaches described in Chapter 23 (Approach to environmental management and mitigation) of the EIS and the mitigation measures compiled in Appendix B of this report.

The environmental performance of the project would be managed by implementing the construction environmental management plan and operational environmental management system (see Chapter 23 of the EIS), which would also ensure compliance with relevant legislation and any conditions of approval. With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures the potential environmental impacts of the project would be adequately managed.

7.4 Next steps

The Department of Planning and Environment will review the EIS, the submissions received, this report and the Response to Submissions. Once the Department of Planning and Environment has completed its assessment, a draft Environmental Assessment Report will be prepared for the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment, which may include recommended conditions of approval. The Environmental Assessment Report will then be provided to the Minister for Planning.

The Minister for Planning will then decide whether or not to approve the project and identify any conditions of approval that would apply. The Minister's determination, including any conditions of approval and the Environmental Assessment Report, will be published on the Department of Planning and Environment's Major Projects website (available via: [Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 | Planning Portal](#)). Transport will continue to engage with the community and key stakeholders during design development, construction and operation to minimise potential impacts on the local and regional environment and the community.

Chapter 8

References



8 References

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Transport for NSW (2022d), *Road Noise Mitigation Guideline*, March 2022. Available at: [Road Noise Mitigation Guideline](#)