

Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment

State Significant Development Assessment Report (SSD-85149458)

July 2026





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Published by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
dphi.nsw.gov.au

Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment (SSD-85149459) Assessment Report

Published: July 2026

Copyright and disclaimer

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure 2026. Information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing, July 2026, and is subject to change. For more information, please visit nsw.gov.au/copyright.

Preface

This assessment report provides a record of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (the Department) assessment and evaluation of the State significant development (SSD) application for the Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment located at 68 Mary Street, Lilyfield, lodged by Inner West Council. The report includes:

- an explanation of why the project is considered SSD and who the consent authority is.
- an assessment of the project against government policy and statutory requirements, including mandatory considerations.
- a demonstration of how matters raised by the community and other stakeholders have been considered.
- an explanation of any changes made to the project during the assessment process.
- an assessment of the significant likely environmental, social and economic impacts of the project.
- an evaluation which weighs up the significant likely impacts and benefits of the project, having regard to the proposed mitigations, offsets, community views and expert advice; and provides a view on whether the impacts are on balance, acceptable.
- a recommendation to the decision-maker, along with the reasons for the recommendation, to assist them in making an informed decision about whether development consent for the project should be granted and any conditions that should be imposed.

Executive Summary

This report details the Department's assessment of the State significant development application SSD-85149458 for the Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment.

This report will be provided to the delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister) for their consideration when deciding whether to grant consent to the SSD.

Project

Inner West Council (the Applicant) proposes to construct and operate the refurbished Leichhardt Oval. The project is located at 68 Mary Street, Lilyfield in the Inner West local government area (LGA).

Strategic context

The Department considers the development is consistent with the principal aims of key relevant strategies including Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy, the Greater Sydney Region Plan and Eastern City District Plan, Transport for NSW's Future Transport Strategy 2056 and the Inner West Council Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Statutory context

The project is classified as State significant development (SSD) under section 4.36 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) because it is for the purpose of a recreation facility (major) with an estimated development cost greater than \$30 million. Consequently, the Minister is the consent authority for the project under section 4.5A of the EP&A Act.

The application is permissible with consent.

Engagement

The Department exhibited the environmental impact statement (EIS) from Friday 16 January 2026 until Thursday 12 February 2026. During the exhibition period, the Department received:

- 22 submissions, including 21 submissions from individuals and one from NSW Rugby League. 10 submissions objected to the project, six submissions supported the project and six provided comment.

- advice from eight government agencies.

Key concerns raised related to the loss of existing trees, car parking availability, heritage and traffic.

The Applicant submitted an Amendment and Submissions report on 15 May 2026 to address the issues raised in submissions and agency advice.

Assessment

Built form and urban design

The Department is satisfied that the proposed built form and urban design outcomes are acceptable. The proposed works to the existing Western Grandstand are designed to be an adaptive re-use, which involves repurposing the existing structure to accommodate new features. The proposed Northern Grandstand provides amenities and food and beverage outlets at the concourse level and introduces additional seats above the existing concourse level, increasing seating capacity and improving amenities. The height and bulk of the refurbishment works respond to the existing site conditions, context and would not result in any unreasonable visual or amenity impacts.

Tree removal and landscaping

The application seeks removal of 13 existing trees to facilitate the construction of the proposed new Northern Grandstand. These trees are a mixture of low, moderate and high retention value. Replacement tree planting is proposed along the Greenway, Darley Road Park and Hawthorne Canal Reserve to offset the canopy loss within the LGA. A total of 33 new canopy trees are proposed to be planted in groupings, including Melaleuca and Eucalyptus. The projected canopy cover after 10 years from establishment is approximately 1,191sqm, exceeding the 1,125sqm proposed to be removed. The Department considers this to be an acceptable level of replacement planting and will compensate for loss of amenity resulting from trees to be removed to accommodate the development.

Heritage

Leichhardt Park, including Leichhardt Oval No 1 (the site) is listed as an item of environmental heritage (Item No.I1197) under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022 (IWLEP). In addition to this, four fig trees in Mary Street adjacent to the entrance to Leichhardt Park (Item No.I1201) are also a locally listed heritage item. There are various heritage items in the vicinity of the site. The proposed works will result in minor adverse physical impacts and little to no visual heritage impacts on the Oval and broader heritage item. The proposed works largely affect low-significance fabric, with new structures designed to be sympathetic to existing forms.

Traffic, transport and parking

The proposal does not seek to increase the existing capacity of the Oval. Spectators will continue to access the Oval on match days by a mix of public transport, walking and private vehicles. Given that no changes are proposed to the overall patron capacity, vehicle trip generation will not increase above existing levels and impacts on surrounding roads and intersections will remain consistent with existing conditions.

Conclusion

Overall, the Department's assessment concludes the project would:

- provide benefit to the community by delivering an improved and refurbished major recreational facility.
- be consistent with government strategy.
- provide 137 construction jobs.

As such, the Department considers the benefits outweigh the costs, that the project is in the public interest and is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Contents

Preface	i
Executive Summary	ii
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Project location	1
2 Project.....	6
2.1 Project overview	6
3 Strategic context	9
3.1 Key strategic issues.....	9
4 Statutory context.....	11
4.1 Permissibility and assessment pathway	11
4.2 Other approvals and authorisations	12
4.3 Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements.....	12
4.4 Mandatory matters for consideration	12
5 Engagement.....	14
5.1 Exhibition of the EIS	14
5.2 Response to Submissions and Amendment Report.....	18
5.3 Request for further information.....	19
6 Assessment.....	20
6.1 Built form and urban design.....	20
6.2 Tree removal and landscaping.....	25
6.3 Heritage	28
6.4 Traffic, transport and parking	31
6.5 Other issues	32
7 Evaluation.....	36
8 Recommendation	37
9 Determination	38

Glossary	39
Appendices	40
Appendix A – Summary of key amendments to the project.....	40
Appendix B – List of referenced documents.....	40
Appendix C – Statutory considerations	41
Appendix D – Recommended instrument of consent	51

1 Introduction

1.1 Project location

The subject site is Leichhardt Oval, located at 68 Mary Street, Lilyfield in the Inner West local government area (LGA). The site is approximately 5km west of the Sydney Central Business District.

The site forms part of Lot 120 of DP 1279860 which includes Leichhardt Oval, Leichhardt Ovals 2 and 3, Leichhardt Aquatic Centre, a section of the 'Bay Run' and other public open space (see **Figure 1**).

The subject application only relates to the primary Leichhardt Oval, as identified in **Figure 2**. The site also includes Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park (Darley Road, Leichhardt) which is the subject of proposed new tree planting.

The existing development within the site is identified in **Figures 3 to 6**.

Further details of the site and surrounding area are described in **Table 1**.



Figure 1 | Aerial context map of the site (Source: EIS)



Figure 2 | The site and surrounding Leichhardt Park context (Source: EIS)



Figure 3 | Wayne Pearce Hill (left and middle) and northern seating bowl (right) (Source: EIS)



Figure 4 | On-site parking (left), demountable bathrooms and bar above the hill (middle) and Western Grandstand (right) (Source: EIS)



Figure 5 | Wayne Pearce Hill and scoreboard (left and middle), southern Keith Barnes Stand and entry from Mary Street (right) (Source: EIS)

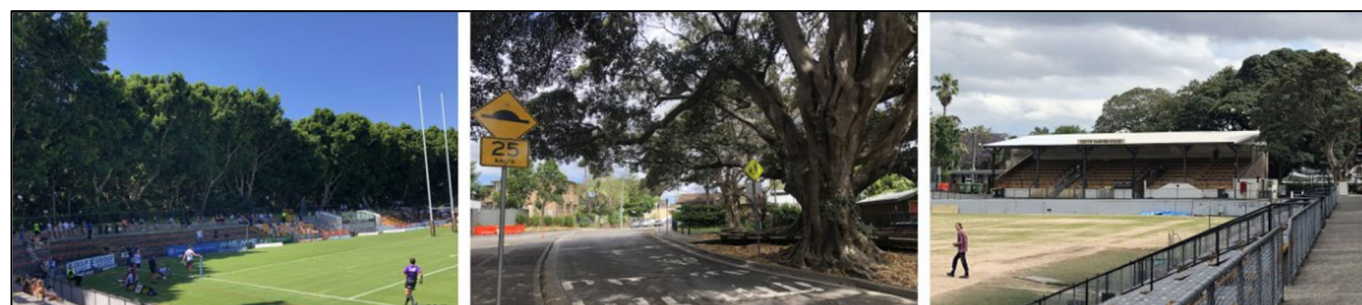


Figure 6 | Existing trees to the north (left), fig tree at Mary Street entry (middle) and Keith Barnes stand (right) (Source: EIS)

Table 1 | Key aspects of the development site

Aspect	Description
Address	Leichhardt Oval (68 Mary Street, Lilyfield) Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park
Local Government Area (LGA)	Inner West
Legal description	Part Lot 120 DP 1279860
Existing development	Leichhardt Oval, which consists of a grass rectangular playing field, seating bowl, Western Grandstand, southern stand, eastern grass hill and scoreboard. The current capacity of the stadium is approximately 19,000.
Surrounding development	<u>North</u> Leichhardt Park Aquatic Centre and Leichhardt Oval 2. The Bay Run and Iron Cove are further north of the site.

Aspect	Description
	<u>South</u> - Low density residential uses. Further south of the site is the Leichhardt North and Lilyfield light rail stops. <u>East</u> - Open space and the Callan Park Conservation Area, consisting of several buildings of heritage significance including Rozelle Hospital and Callan Park House. <u>West</u> - Leichhardt Park carpark and Leichhardt Oval 3. Further to the west is the Bay Run and Iron Cove.
Surrounding roads	Mary Street (south and west) and Glover Street (north and east).
Existing trees	Hill's Weeping Fig trees to the north, east and west (see Figures 7 and 8).
Existing access	- Pedestrian access – Mary Street and Glover Street. - Vehicle access – primary access from Mary Street and secondary access from Glover Street.
Public transport	- Leichhardt North Light Rail approximately 700m to the south. - Perry Street bus stops approximately 500m to the south.
Heritage	Locally listed heritage item (Item No I1197) - Leichhardt Park under Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022 (IWLEP), including Leichhardt Oval No 1 (the site). Four fig trees in Mary Street adjacent to the entrance to Leichhardt Park (Item No.I1201) are also a locally listed heritage item. There are various heritage items in the vicinity of the site as follows: 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, IWLEP no. C64 and 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Avenue, Lilyfield, IWLEP no. I1193. - State Heritage Register - Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Balmain Road, Lilyfield, State Heritage Register (SHR) no. 00818 and 'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Balmain Road, Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831.



Figure 7 | Aerial image of trees surrounding Leichhardt Oval (Source: EIS)



Figure 8 | Existing trees at the northern end of Leichhardt Oval (Source: EIS)

2 Project

2.1 Project overview

The key aspects of the project are provided in detail in the Project Description chapter of the EIS and are outlined in **Table 2** and illustrated in **Figure 9**.

Table 2 | Key aspects of the project

Aspect	Description
Project summary	Refurbishment and upgrade works to Leichhardt Oval including upgrades to the existing Western Grandstand, seating bowl and new Northern Grandstand.
Built form and design	• Upgrades to the existing Western Grandstand, including: ○ demolition of the existing spectator and player amenities located on the ground floor, existing seating, broadcast areas, hospitality and coaching facilities on level 2, existing stairs at the front of the grandstand and some facade elements. ○ upgrades to the existing ground floor to provide new player change rooms and facilities, medical facilities, facilities for match officials and coaching staff, spectator amenities, utilities and other ‘match day’ related facilities. ○ upgrades to and expansion of the mezzanine level within the grandstand to provide a new ‘Grandstand Bar’, gym, spectator amenities, stairs and storage, as well as the relocation of the existing telecommunications server. ○ upgrades to the existing level 2 to deliver new spectator seating, corporate suites, television and radio broadcasting facilities, spectator amenities and the upgrading of the existing Centurions Lounge corporate area. ○ improved spectator circulation and egress arrangements to meet standards and general upgrades and maintenance to the existing building. • The construction of a new Northern Grandstand, including: ○ earthworks and modification of existing retaining wall and embankment. ○ a new concourse to provide spectator amenities and food and beverage offerings. ○ new spectator seating to Level 1 of the grandstand above the concourse. • The replacement of existing seating to the lower seating bowl surrounding the playing field to provide greater amenity and improved wheelchair accessibility.

Aspect	Description
Uses and activities	Sporting events (rugby league, rugby union and football).
Venue capacity	- Existing seated capacity: approximately 6,381 seats. - Existing total capacity: approximately 19,000 people. - Proposed seated capacity: approximately 8,717 seats. - Proposed total capacity: approximately 19,000 people (no change to existing).
Vehicular access, car parking and loading	<u>Vehicular access and car parking</u> - No changes are proposed to the existing vehicle access arrangements. Emergency vehicles and match-day related service vehicles will continue to access the site from Mary Street and Glover Street. - Two dedicated ambulance bays are located behind the Western Grandstand in the restricted car park. The proposed medical facilities connect directly to these bays. - Five dedicated police bays are also provided at the rear of the Western Grandstand. <u>Loading</u> - Existing loading and services will be retained to the rear of the Western Grandstand adjacent Mary Street. Existing arrangements includes dedicated car parking for food and beverage operators and lift access to the Western Grandstand.
Landscaping and tree removal	- Removal of 13 existing trees to accommodate the proposed new Northern Grandstand. - Replacement planting comprising 33 new trees within Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park.
Signage	New wayfinding signage within the existing Oval.
Jobs	137 construction jobs and no additional operational jobs.



Figure 9 | Visual perspective view with new Northern Grandstand to the distant centre right of picture
(Source: EIS)

3 Strategic context

3.1 Key strategic issues

The project is largely consistent with the strategies, plans and policies outlined in **Table 3**, and therefore the Department considers it appropriate for the site.

Table 3 | Summary of government strategies, plans and policies

Strategy, plan or policy	Consistency	Comments
Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2042	Consistent	The refurbishment of Leichhardt Oval aligns with the vision for stadia and sporting venues as outlined in the State Infrastructure Strategy. As a socially and culturally important sports ground, the redevelopment of Leichhardt Oval will ensure that the Oval continues to have a positive impact on the sporting identity and economy of the local area and the State. As envisaged under the Strategy, the redevelopment of the Oval will also contribute to the State's economy and competitiveness by attracting skilled workers and visitors.
Transport for NSW's Future Transport Strategy 2056	Consistent	The proposed development seeks to maximise use of public transport and active travel, and to minimise private vehicle travel where possible.
Office of Sport Strategic Plan 2024-2028	Consistent	The proposed development is aligned to the NSW Office of Sport strategic plan as it will improve the seated capacity and adaptability of the ground, facilitating a greater range of professional and community sporting events. Per the Plan, the proposed development will promote and support the delivery of facilities and spaces that are adaptable, accessible and enable utilisation by all participants.
Greater Sydney Region Plan and Eastern City District Plan	Consistent	The development would facilitate the provision of jobs and services within the Inner West LGA. It would be consistent with the Eastern City District Plan as it would provide services and social infrastructure, provide for investment and jobs, and provide a key piece of social infrastructure to foster a healthy and connected social community.

Strategy, plan or policy	Consistency	Comments
Inner West Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	Consistent	The proposed development is consistent with the community and economic objectives of the LSPS. In particular, the proposed development will deliver improved recreation activities, contribute to a thriving and diverse economy including night time economy and reinforce the Inner West as a leading creative and culture hub.
Inner West Council Recreation Strategy and Action Plan 2023- 32	Consistent	Council's Recreation Strategy and Action Plan sets out actions and outcomes for the redevelopment of Leichhardt Oval, including the undertaken master plan stage. The proposed development will deliver on the actions called for in the plan, for Council to deliver a master plan and refurbishment of Leichhardt Oval. The proposed development will respect and celebrate the cultural and historical significance of Leichhardt Oval to the Inner West community and existing activities within the Leichhardt Park precinct, as set out in the Strategy and Action Plan

4 Statutory context

4.1 Permissibility and assessment pathway

Details of the legal pathway under which consent is sought and the permissibility of the project are provided in **Table 4**.

Table 4 | Permissibility and assessment pathway

Consideration	Description
Assessment pathway	State significant development The project is declared SSD under section 4.36 of the EP&A Act as it satisfies the criteria under section 2.6(1) of the Planning Systems SEPP, pursuant to clause 13(1) of Schedule 1, as the development is for the purpose of a recreation facility (major) with an estimated development cost greater than \$30 million. The proposed development on the land concerned is, by the operation of an environmental planning instrument, not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, and the proposed development is specified in section 13(1) of Schedule 1 of the Planning Systems SEPP.
Consent authority	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces The Minister is the consent authority under section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act.
Decision-maker	Director, Social Infrastructure Assessments - In accordance with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces delegation to determine applications, dated 9 March 2022, the Director, Social Infrastructure Assessments may determine the application as: - Inner West Council (Council) has not made an objection to the application. - there are less than 15 public submissions objecting to the application. - a political disclosure statement has not been made for the application.
Permissibility	Permissible with consent The site is located within the RE1 Public Recreation zone under IWLEP. Development for the purposes of recreational facilities (major) is permitted with development consent at the site. Therefore, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces or a delegate may determine the carrying out of the development.

Consideration	Description
	The site is not subject to any building height or lot size development standards under IWLEP. Consideration of the proposal against the other requirements of IWLEP is provided in Appendix C.

4.2 Other approvals and authorisations

The project will not require an environment protection licence issued by the NSW Environment Protection Authority under section 42 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.

Under section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, a number of other authorisations required under other Acts are not required for SSD and SSI. This is because all relevant issues are considered during the assessment of the SSD application.

Under section 4.42 of the EP&A Act, certain approvals cannot be refused if they are necessary to carry out the SSD (e.g. approvals for any road works under the *Roads Act 1993*). These authorisations must be substantially consistent with any SSD development consent for the project.

The Department has consulted with and considered the advice of the relevant government agencies responsible for these other authorisations in its assessment of the project (see **Section 5** and **Section 6**). Suitable conditions have been included in the recommended conditions of consent.

4.3 Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements

The Department's review determined that the EIS addresses each matter set out in the Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) issued on 23 June 2025 and is sufficient to enable an adequate consideration and assessment of the project for determination purposes.

4.4 Mandatory matters for consideration

4.4.1 Matters of consideration required by the EP&A Act

Section 4.15 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 shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5 | Matters for consideration

Matter for consideration	Department's assessment
Environmental planning instruments, proposed instruments, development control plans & planning agreements	Appendix C
EP&A Regulation	Appendix C
Significant likely impacts	Section 6 – Assessment
Suitability of the site	Section 1.3 - Project background, Section 3 - Strategic Context and Section 6 - Assessment
Public submissions	Section 5 - Engagement & Section 6 - Assessment
Public interest	Section 5 - Engagement, Section 6 - Assessment and Section 7 - Evaluation

4.4.2 Objects of the EP&A Act

In determining the application, the consent authority should consider whether the project is consistent with the relevant objects of the EP&A Act (s 1.3) including the principles of ecologically sustainable development. Consideration of those factors is described in **Appendix C**.

As a result of the analyses in **Appendix C**, the Department is satisfied that the development is consistent with the objectives of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

4.4.3 Biodiversity development assessment report

Section 7.9(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) requires all SSD applications to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) unless the Planning Agency Head and the Environment Agency Head determine that the project is not likely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values (as identified in the BC Act and in the *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017*).

A BDAR waiver request was submitted to the Department on 15 October 2025. The Environment Agency Head and the Team Leader, Social Infrastructure as delegate of the Planning Secretary, determined that the development is not likely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values. A BDAR waiver was granted on 30 October 2025.

5 Engagement

5.1 Exhibition of the EIS

5.1.1 Public exhibition of the EIS

After accepting the development application and EIS, the Department:

- publicly exhibited the project from 16 January 2026 until 12 February 2026 on the NSW Planning Portal.
- notified occupiers and landowners in the vicinity of the site about the public exhibition.
- notified and invited comment from relevant government agencies and Inner West Council.

5.1.2 Summary of advice received from government agencies

The Department received advice from eight government agencies and utility providers on the EIS. A summary of the agency advice is provided in **Table 6**. A link to the full copy of the advice is provided in **Appendix C**.

Table 6 | Summary of agency advice

Agency	Advice summary
Heritage NSW	Heritage NSW advised that: - the site does not contain any SHR listed items. - there are two listed SHR items in the vicinity of the site: Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings (SHR 00818) and Rozelle Hospital-Broughton Hall (SHR 00831). The Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) assesses that the proposal would have little to no heritage impacts on these SHR items. Heritage NSW agrees with this assessment. - further clarification is requested with respect to historical archaeology as there are discrepancies in the extent of the study area assessed.
Heritage NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (Heritage ACH)	Heritage ACH advised that the EIS and supporting documents meets the SEAR's requirements in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage but sought clarification on the study area adopted for the ACH report.

Agency	Advice summary
Conservation Programs Heritage & Regulation (CPHR) Group	Advised that: - the submitted Flood Statement confirms that the site is outside flood prone land and is unaffected in all modelled events including the PMF. Accordingly, no further consultation is required regarding flood risk management. - the proposal remains consistent with the BDAR waiver granted.
Transport for NSW (TfNSW)	Requested that the Green Travel Plan (GTP) be updated to address the following matters and recommended a condition of consent relating to traffic and transport management plans for large scale events: - Parking Management Strategy to implement non-patron parking within the site. - mode share targets for staff not provided. - details of bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities to be documented. - Implementation Plan to be included. - travel surveys should be prepared for staff and visitors to identify travel origin and destination patterns as well as trip modes. - additional contingencies added concerning governance of the GTP. - Travel Access Guide (TAG) should be updated to include more comprehensive mapping, information regarding service routes and public transport timetables, walking/cycling facilities, any relevant initiatives and car share information.
NSW State Emergency Service (SES)	Recommended consideration of climate change modelling to identify any changes to flood risk.
NSW Fire and Rescue	Raised no concerns with the proposed development.
Crown Lands	Raised no concerns with the proposed development.
Ausgrid	Raised no concerns with the proposed development.

5.1.3 Summary of Council submission

Inner West Council advised that, as the Applicant, they will not be making a submission on the proposal.

5.1.4 Summary of public submissions

The Department received 22 submissions¹ during the public exhibition period of the EIS, including 21 submissions from individuals and one from NSW Rugby League. A total of 10 submissions objected to the project, six submissions supported the project and six provided comment. Further detail is provided in **Table 7** and a link to all submissions in full is provided in **Appendix B**.

Table 7 | Key issues raised in submissions on the EIS

Summary of key issues

Insufficient consultation and information provided

- Insufficient consultation has been undertaken with the local community.
- The EIS does not outline the impact of the project on patrons of Leichhardt Park Aquatic Centre, does not mention parking provided in Orange Grove Public School on game day and parking survey did not include streets on the other side of the City West Link.
- Traffic surveys were not undertaken on game days with large crowds.
- The traffic study incorrectly states that Glover Street is restricted parking on both sides.
- Incorrect descriptions in the EIS regarding the type of development surrounding the site.

Car parking and traffic impacts

- Insufficient consideration of the car parking impacts upon the local area.
- A multi-storey carpark with 15,000 car spaces should be built.
- Event organisers should be required to liaise with Transport for NSW regarding transport arrangements on game day.

Acoustic impacts

- Noise impacts are likely to increase as a result of the refurbishment.

Tree removal

- Concerns with the proposed tree removal at the northern end of the Oval and associated loss of tree canopy, habitat, amenity and existing character.
- Increased heat risk and reduced shade due to tree removal.
- The replacement planting offered does not provide an equal offset for the trees removed.
- Failure to align with NSW Canopy & Sustainability Targets.
- The proposed new Northern Grandstand is not justifiable given that it results in removal of significant existing trees.

¹ Each petition or submission that contains the same or substantially the same text is counted as one submission in accordance with section 2.7(6) of the Planning System SEPP.

Summary of key issues

Loss of character

- New stadium seating proposed would adversely impact the local character of the existing Oval.
- Keep and enhance the hill experience.
- Hospitality and media facilities should not be prioritised.

Design of the new Northern Grandstand

- The new Northern Grandstand should incorporate a roof over to provide undercover seating.
- The new Northern Grandstand fails to provide corporate facilities which is a missed opportunity.

The proposal is not of State significance

- Grounds should be provided as to why the proposal is considered State significant development.

External colours

- The proposed orange and black seating colours are divisive as it disregards sporting teams and codes aside from the Wests Tigers NRL.
- A neutral palette would make everyone of diverse sectors of the community feel welcome.

Other

- The Oval should accommodate music concerts.

Support for the project

- Benefits for the community and local economy.
- Improved spectator experience.
- Improved accessibility.
- Benefits for NSW Rugby League in terms of grassroots, women's participation and long term viability.

5.1.5 Summary of issues raised outside of the exhibition process

Feedback was also received from the community outside of the exhibition process. The Department received feedback from two individuals. The concerns related to tree removal and availability of on-street car parking.

5.2 Response to Submissions and Amendment Report

Following the public exhibition period, the Department asked the Applicant to respond to the issues raised in submissions and the advice received from government agencies.

The Applicant provided a submissions report in conjunction with an amendment to the development application (a 'Submissions and Amendment Report' (SAR)) to the Department on 15 May 2026 (see **Appendix B**). The Department published the SAR on the NSW Planning Portal and forwarded the SAR to relevant government agencies for comment on 19 May 2026.

The changes made to the project include:

- replacement tree planting along the Greenway, Darley Road Park and Hawthorne Canal Reserve, which incorporates additional land to the subject SSD application.
- design changes to the south western forecourt, Western Grandstand, Northern Grandstand and materials and finishes.

The following additional information was provided to the Department:

- a revised Green Travel Plan addressing comments made by TfNSW.
- advice that the renders depicting the colour scheme for the seating is indicative only.
- confirmation that that traffic report considers available survey material which was based on NRL games/attendance to address concerns raised in the submissions.
- confirmation of the specific public consultation and engagement that was undertaken in respect of the project.

5.2.1 Summary of agency advise on the SAR

Further advice was provided from three agencies on the SAR. A summary of the agency advice is provided in **Table 8**.

Table 8 | Summary of agency advice on the SAR

Agency	Summary of advice
Heritage NSW	Heritage NSW: • advised that the proposed design amendments would not result in additional heritage impacts on State Heritage Register items in the vicinity. • confirmed that the updated SoHI satisfactorily addresses the previous advice issued. • recommended that the areas the subject of replacement tree planting are further assessed to ensure that the requirements of the SEARs in relation to environmental heritage are met.
Heritage ACH	Heritage ACH advised that the clarification sought on the study area adopted for the ACH report has been satisfactorily addressed and recommended that the areas the subject of replacement tree planting are further assessed to ensure that the requirements of the SEARs in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage are met.
TfNSW	TfNSW confirmed that the updated GTP is acceptable, subject to a condition of consent requiring it to be updated to reflect any traffic and transport management plans prepared for future large scale events at the subject site, in accordance with the TfNSW Guide to Traffic and Transport Management for Special Events.

5.3 Request for further information

On 3 June 2026, the Department asked the Applicant to provide further information to address the matters raised by Heritage NSW, Heritage ACH and TfNSW on the SAR. On 7 July 2026, the Applicant provided additional information in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment and Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment Report in relation to the land the subject of replacement tree planting. The additional information confirms that there would be little to no heritage impacts caused as a result of the tree planting proposed within Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park.

6 Assessment

6.1 Built form and urban design

Western Grandstand

The EIS indicates that the existing Western Grandstand at Leichhardt Oval requires significant upgrades to meet modern stadium standards, accommodate the needs of players, media and spectators and comply with accessibility requirements. Key deficiencies include inadequate aisle spacing, a lack of wheelchair accessible seating, non-compliant player and match official amenities and inaccessible and poorly designed corporate facilities.

The proposed works to the existing Western Grandstand are designed to be an adaptive re-use, which involves repurposing the existing structure to accommodate new features. The existing structural elements, including the concrete frame and seating platforms, are retained and there is no change to the maximum existing height of the Western Grandstand (RL37.15).

The major upgrades for the ground level include demolishing and expanding ground floor facilities, creating new access points (vomitories/access corridors), upgrading bathroom facilities and ensuring full sporting code compliance. The new mezzanine (Level 1) is proposed to adaptively reuse underutilised space within the existing Western Grandstand. The proposed upgrades seek to provide space for flexible uses, including food and beverage and a gym (see **Figure 11**). The mezzanine will benefit from cross ventilation and through delivering new vomitories, allow for wheelchair accessible seating to be delivered within the Western Grandstand. The mezzanine refurbishment also affords the opportunity to remove the stairs on the eastern facade to improve egress along the concourse level.

The proposed works on Level 2 incorporate improved access, viewing areas, spectator comfort and enhanced corporate facilities (see **Figure 12**). The Centurion's Lounge, added in 2009, is proposed to be integrated into the new design. Upgrades are proposed to its eastern façade to improve operability and natural ventilation, while updates to the seating area will enhance accessibility and spectator comfort. Consistent with the Level 1 works, the removal of the existing eastern stairs will enhance egress and circulation at the concourse level.

The design of the refurbishment has been guided by the Government Architect NSW (GANSW) as part of the State Design Review Panel (SDRP) process. During the process, the panel raised concerns with respect to the stair design at the southern end of the Western Grandstand. At SAR stage, the Applicant amended these aspects of the design which satisfactorily addresses the concerns identified by the SDRP. Overall, the Department considers that the refurbishment works to the Western Grandstand present an acceptable built form that would not generate any significant additional impacts beyond that of the existing structure. The site is not subject to a maximum height

of building development standard under the IWLEP. The proposed works would enhance the existing players, official and spectator amenities and ensure compliance with relevant technical requirements.

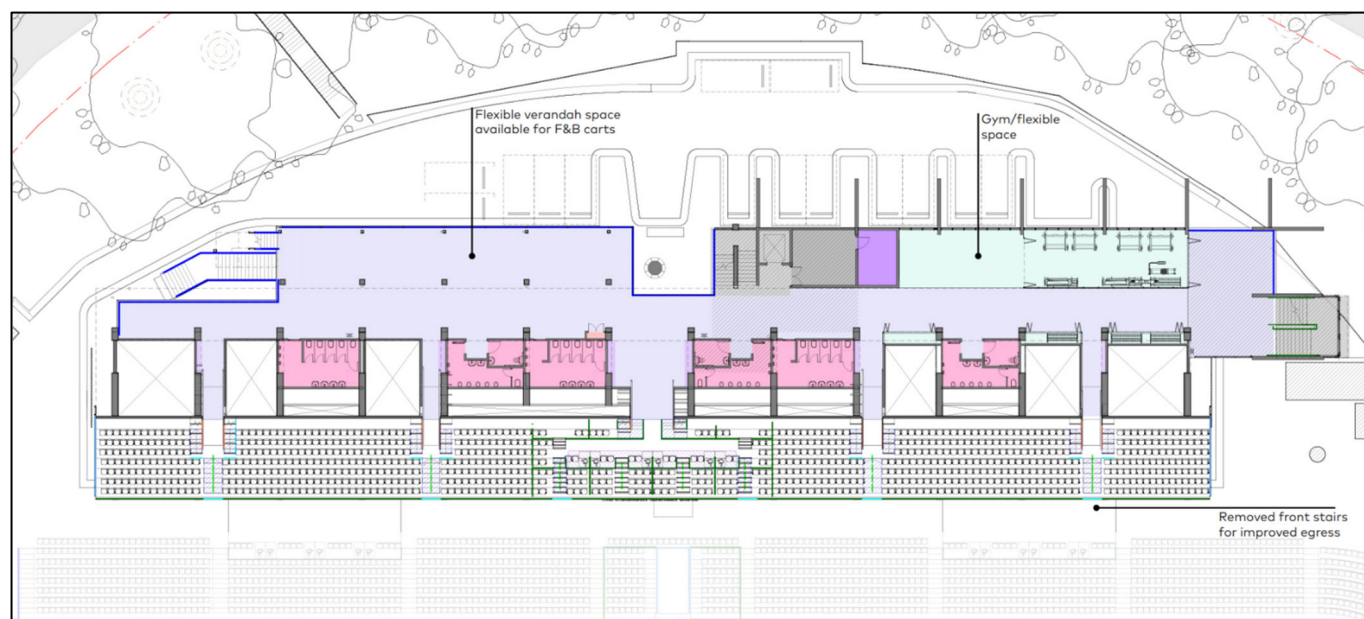


Figure 11 | Western Grandstand Level 1 – Mezzanine (Source: EIS)

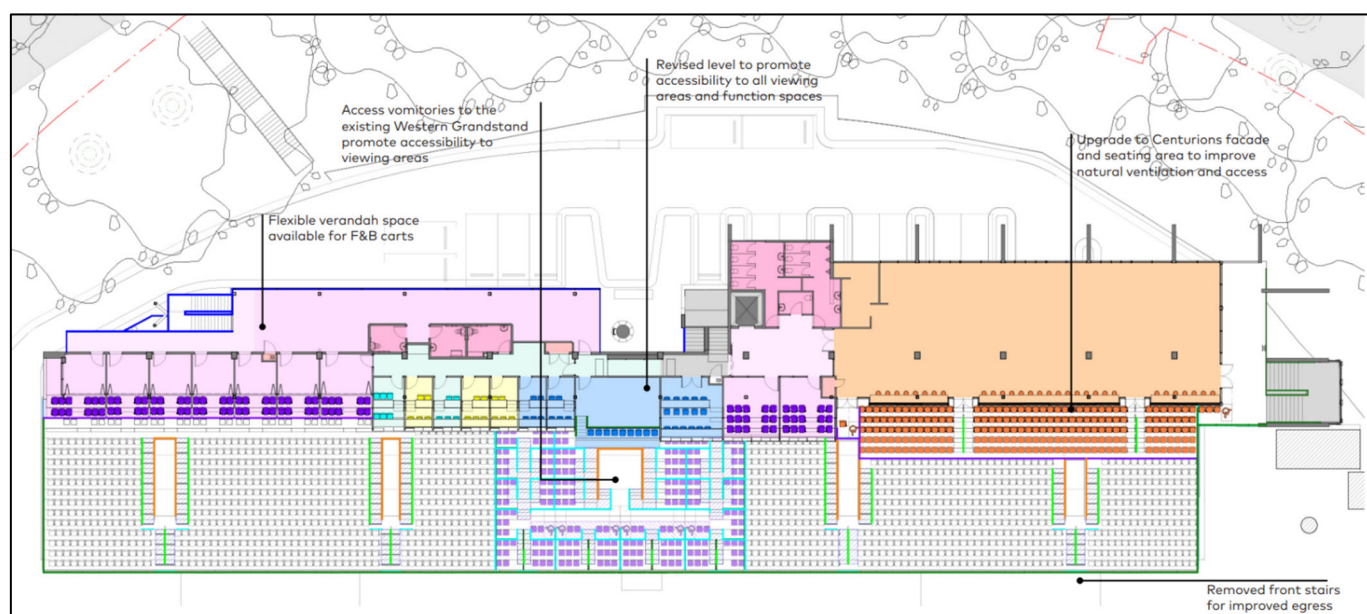


Figure 12 | Western Grandstand Level 2 (Source: EIS)

Northern Grandstand

The proposal includes a new grandstand at the northern end of the Oval. The proposed Northern Grandstand is an open seating deck that is separated from the lower seating bowl by a low retaining wall. Due to spatial and heritage constraints limiting seating expansion elsewhere around the Oval, the northern end presents the primary opportunity to enhance seated capacity.

The proposed Northern Grandstand provides amenities and food and beverage outlets at the concourse level and introduces approximately 1,722 additional seats suspended above the existing concourse level (see **Figure 13**), increasing seating capacity and improving amenities.

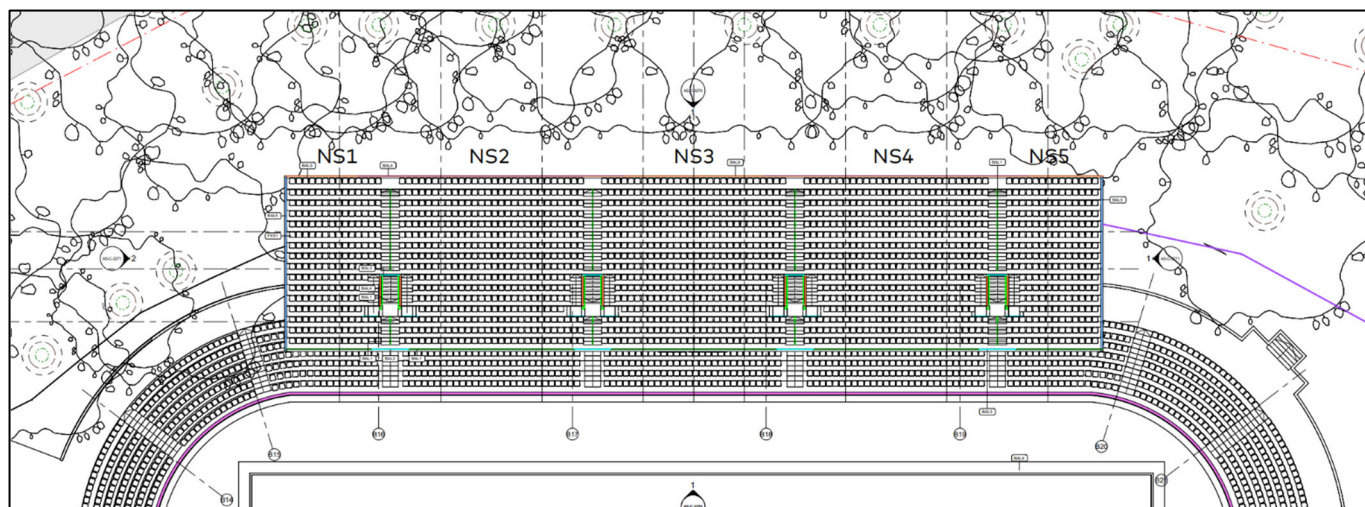


Figure 13 | Proposed Northern Grandstand – Level 1 (Source: EIS)

The Department acknowledges that the proposed Northern Grandstand results in the removal of existing fig trees and this was a key issue raised throughout the submissions. This matter has been addressed in **Section 6.2** of this report.

The Northern Grandstand does not feature a roof and concerns have been raised about this in the submissions on the basis of insufficient weather protection. The Department notes that the SDRP supported and encouraged a lightweight and open architectural expression of the Northern Grandstand. Notwithstanding this, the design of the Northern Grandstand does not preclude the provision of a roof in the future.

In their review, the SDRP raised concerns with the extent of structure at the rear, light, ventilation and spatial quality within circulation areas beneath the seating tiers as well as the dimensions of queuing areas and circulation zones associated with bathrooms and food and beverage facilities. At SAR stage, the Applicant amended the design of the Northern Grandstand to reconfigure the amenities and placement of food and beverage facilities, simplify the vertical circulation, provide clearer wayfinding and reduce the structure at the rear through significantly reducing the extent of the elevated rear deck. A comparison of the proposed concourse level from EIS to SAR stage is provided in **Figures 14 and 15**.

Further, the Department notes that the height of the new Northern Grandstand would be below the existing Western Grandstand and the existing tree canopy behind. The Northern Grandstand is considered to be a relatively lightweight structure that integrates acceptably with the concourse level and adjacent seating bowl around the perimeter of the playing field. Overall, the Department considers it to be acceptable response to the site constraints and supports the design.

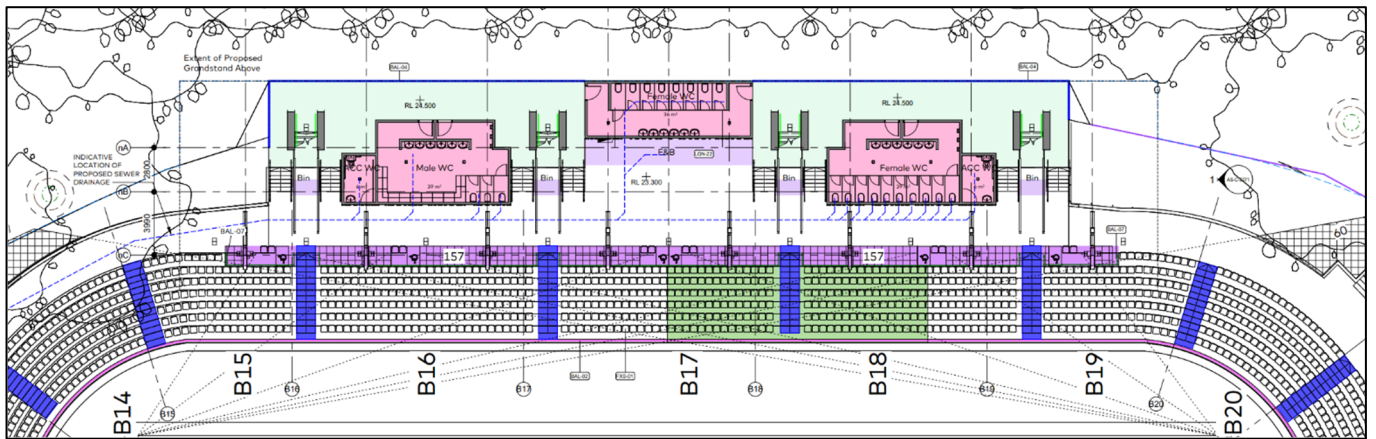


Figure 14 | Proposed Northern Grandstand – Concourse level at EIS stage (Source: EIS)

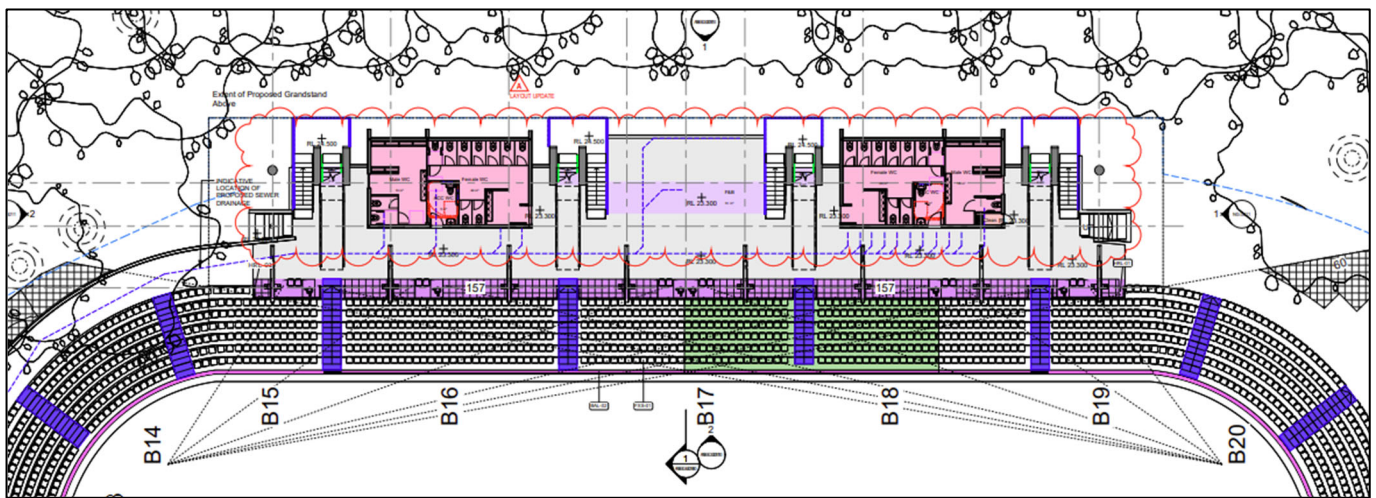


Figure 15 | Proposed Northern Grandstand – Concourse level at SAR stage (Source: SAR)

Refurbished seating bowl

The existing lower bowl seating area is a result of multiple past upgrades, resulting in a mix of three different seat types and timber benches. This has created compliance issues, an inconsistent public seating experience and compromised external presentation.

The proposed refurbishment of the lower seating bowl focuses on enhancing the overall experience for patrons and staff through significant improvements to circulation, connectivity to essential public facilities and access to both the new Northern Grandstand and the existing hill area. A key component of the lower bowl upgrade is a comprehensive review and redistribution of accessible seating options and stair aisles. The lower seating bowl has been reconfigured to comply with the relevant requirements, adhering to a maximum of 28 seats between aisles and 14 seats to an end aisle. The proposal ensures that wheelchair users and spectators with limited mobility are offered the same opportunity to view events with dedicated accessible seating options.

Visual impacts

A Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) was submitted with the EIS. The VIA considers the potential visual impacts of the proposal from 13 public viewpoints (see **Figure 16**) within the surrounding area. Due to the site's location amongst significant green space and adjacent Iron Cove, many of the identified public views are considered to be of high value.

The VIA provided has determined that the visual impacts of the proposed development will be negligible from these high value views, and in many cases not visible at all. A summary of the view points and assessment of impacts, taken from the VIA, is provided in **Figure 16** and demonstrates that the proposed redevelopment will not result in any adverse visual impacts on the identified public viewpoints. Low to moderate impacts are experienced in the vicinity of the oval, but the new structures are visually appropriate within the surrounding context and sympathetic to existing forms (see **Section 6.3** of this report.)

Viewpoint and location	Visual sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Visual impact
Viewpoint 1 - View south-west from Iron Cove Bridge	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 2 - View south from Drummoyne Swimming Centre	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 3 - View south from Henley Marine Drive, Drummoyne	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 4 - View south-east from Henley Marine Drive, Drummoyne	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 5 - View south-east from Janet Street, Drummoyne	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 6 - View south-east from Rodd Park, Rodd Point	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 7 - View east from Timbrell Drive, Five Dock	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 8 - View north-east from the Bay Run, City West Link	High	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 9 - View north from Mary Street, Lilyfield	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 10 - View east from Leichhardt Oval Number 3	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 11 - View north from the Keith Barnes Stand, Leichhardt Oval	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Viewpoint 12 - View north-east from the carpark, Leichhardt Oval	Low	Low	Low
Viewpoint 13 - View north-east from Mary Street, Lilyfield	Moderate	Low	Moderate-Low

Figure 16 | Visual impact ratings summary (Source: EIS)

6.2 Tree removal and landscaping

The application seeks removal of 13 existing trees to facilitate the construction of the proposed new Northern Grandstand. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) was submitted with the EIS, which confirms that the trees proposed to be removed include:

- two trees of very low retention value, being Tree No. T4 (Hills Weeping Fig) and Tree No. T18 (Cedar Wattle).
- five trees of moderate retention value, being Tree No. T5 and T9 (Hills Weeping Figs) and T19, T20 and T21 (Swamp Oaks).
- six trees of high retention value, being Tree No. T1, T3, T7, T8, T10 and T11 (Hills Weeping Figs).

The proposed new Northern Grandstand proximity to the trees proposed to be removed, as well as those to be retained, is shown in **Figure 17**.

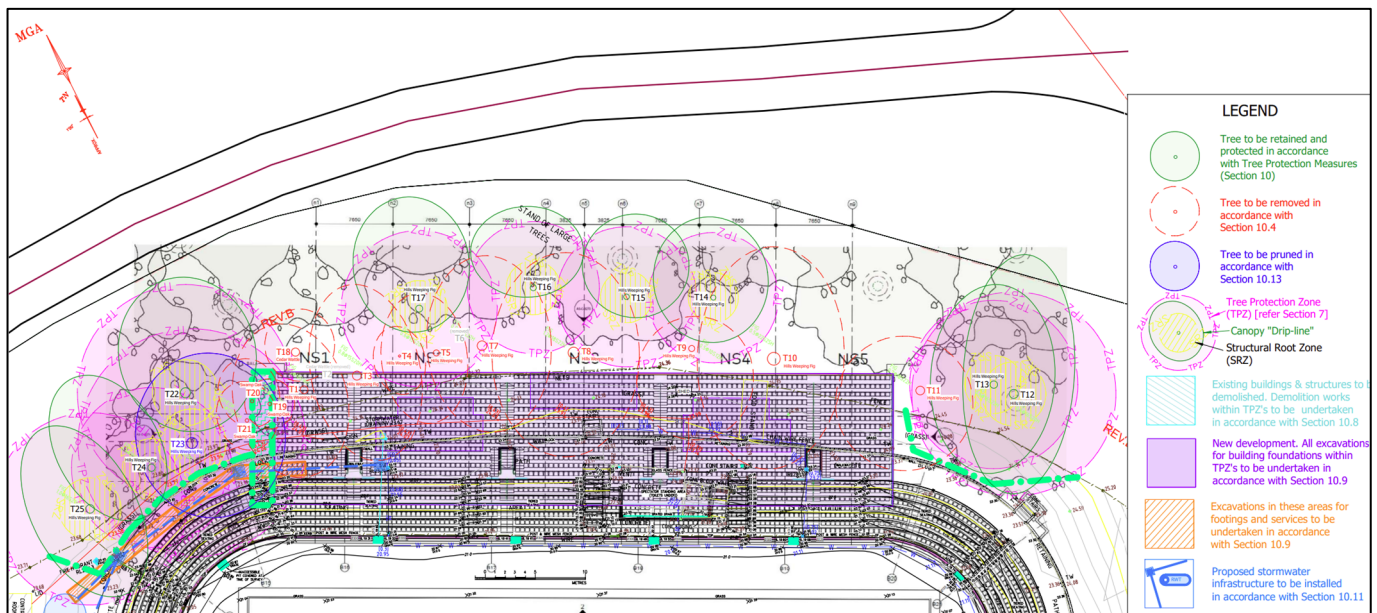


Figure 17 | Tree removal and protection diagram (Source: EIS)

The Department acknowledges that concerns have been raised by the general public regarding proposed tree removal. The following justification is provided by the Applicant for the proposed removal of 13 trees at the northern end of the site:

- Tree No. T18 (Cedar Wattle) and T4 (Hills Weeping Fig) - neither of these trees are considered significant or worthy of special measures to ensure their preservation. The removal of these trees to accommodate the proposed development is therefore considered warranted in this instance.
- Tree No. T5 and T9 (Hills Weeping Figs) and T19, T20 and T21 (Swamp Oaks) - these trees are not considered significant but are in good health and condition and make a fair contribution to the

amenity of the site. In order to compensate for loss of amenity resulting from the removal of these trees to accommodate the proposed development, replacement planting is recommended.

- Tree No. T1, T3, T7, T8, T10 and T11 (Hills Weeping Figs) – these trees have no special ecological or heritage significance but are in good health and condition and make a positive contribution to the amenity of the site. There are no feasible options that can be recommended that would permit the trees to be retained in this instance given the size and proximity to the proposed Northern Grandstand, particularly given the relative position of the seating stand and sub-frame structure, which extends into the crowns of these trees, resulting in crown loss. To compensate for loss of amenity resulting from the removal of these trees to accommodate the proposed development, replacement planting is recommended.
- the total canopy cover proposed to be removed to accommodate the proposed development is approximately 1,125sqm (about 3 per cent of the total area of the site) and the total canopy cover to be retained within the site is approximately 9,600sqm (about 25 per cent of the site area).
- the SoHI provided does not identify the Fig trees at the northern end of the Oval as being integral to the identify and character of the site. Rather, the four fig trees in Mary Street adjacent to the entrance to Leichhardt Park are a locally listed heritage item (Item No.I1201) and would not be impacted by the proposed development.
- the proposed development ensures that a row of Hills Weeping Fig Trees is retained at the rear of the proposed new Northern Grandstand. The height of the Northern Grandstand is below the top of these trees to retain the existing character of the Oval with a vegetated backdrop (see **Figure 20** and previous **Figure 9**).

The Applicant subsequently amended the application at SAR stage to provide the recommended replacement tree planting. Consultation with Council concluded that there was no suitable location for replacement planting within Leichhardt Oval and planting in this location would not maximise the benefits of the replacement canopy. As a result, replacement tree planting is proposed along the Greenway, Darley Road Park and Hawthorne Canal Reserve to offset the canopy loss within the LGA (see **Figures 18** and **19**). A total of 33 new canopy trees are proposed to be planted in groupings comprising a selection of 200L species selected from Sydney Coastal Enriched Sandstone Forest and Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest plant communities, including *Melaleuca* and *Eucalyptus*. The projected canopy cover after 10 years from establishment is approximately 1,191sqm, exceeding the 1,125sqm proposed to be removed. Council considers this to be an acceptable level of replacement planting and will compensate for loss of amenity resulting from trees to be removed to accommodate the development.



Figure 18 | Context of replacement planting location (Source: SAR)



Figure 19 | Tree offset plan (Source: SAR)

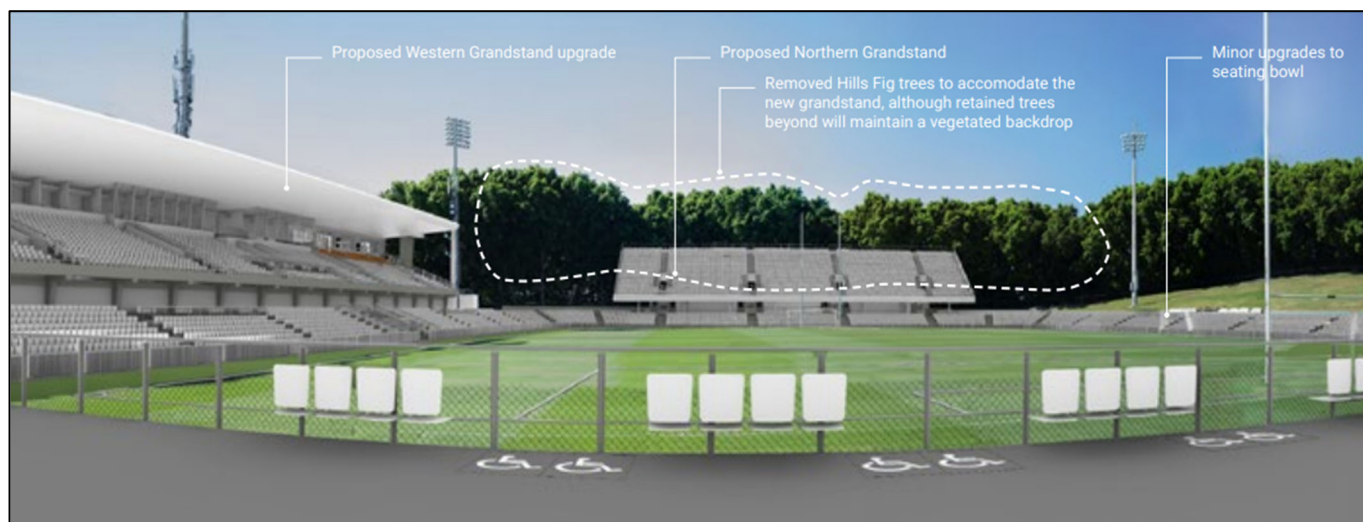


Figure 20 | Visual representation of the new Northern Grandstand in relation to the retained trees (Source: EIS)

The Department notes that the proposed works will encroach into the tree protection zone and canopy of certain trees at the Oval site. However, the AIA confirms that the proposed encroachments are within acceptable limits and are unlikely to result in adverse impacts on the health of the trees. The Department has recommended suitable conditions of consent in respect of the trees to be protected and retained.

Overall, the Department accepts that the position of the new Northern Grandstand does not permit all of the existing trees at the northern end of the site to be retained. The justification presented by the Applicant is accepted in the circumstances and the replacement tree planting at a nearby reserve/park is considered to be an initiative worthy of support.

6.3 Heritage

Leichhardt Park, including Leichhardt Oval No 1 is listed as an item of environmental heritage (Item No.I1197) under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the IWLEP (see **Figure 21**). In addition to this, four fig trees in Mary Street adjacent to the entrance to Leichhardt Park (Item No.I1201) are also a locally listed heritage item. There are various heritage items in the vicinity of the site as follows:

- IWLEP – ‘Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area’, Lilyfield, IWLEP no.C64 and ‘Street trees – avenue of Brush Box’, Campbell Avenue, Lilyfield, IWLEP no.I1193.
- State Heritage Register - Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings’, Balmain Road, Lilyfield, SHR no. 00818 and ‘Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall’, Balmain Road, Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831.



Figure 21 | Listed heritage items (Source: EIS)

A SoHI was submitted with the EIS. The SoHI considers that the proposed development would result in the following heritage impacts:

- built heritage: the proposed upgrades to the Oval will result in minor adverse physical impacts and little to no visual heritage impacts to the Oval and broader heritage item. The proposed works largely affect low-significance fabric, with new structures designed to be sympathetic to existing forms. It is possible that some potential impacts could occur due to construction vibration. Mitigation measures are recommended to minimise any potential indirect heritage impacts. The works have been assessed as having little to no physical or visual impacts to nearby heritage items.
- historical archaeology: there is low potential for substantial and intact archaeological resources within the study area, it is assessed that the proposal would result in minor adverse impacts to significant historical archaeological resources.

The Department concurs with the conclusions drawn within the SOHI. Furthermore, the agency advice received from Heritage NSW confirms that the proposed works would not result in any adverse heritage impacts.

Overall, the proposal is not considered to result in any adverse impact on heritage grounds.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report was provided with the application which concludes the following:

- no known aboriginal objects listed on the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) are present within the study area.
- while the study area is located within 200m of water and within proximity to sandstone resources, extensive modification of the study area would have substantially disturbed or removed subsurface deposits.
- the study area is assessed to be of no scientific significance and does not contain specific historical, aesthetic, socio/cultural values.
- although the proposal would cause ground disturbance throughout the study area, there is no evidence that such works will cause harm to Aboriginal sites.

Heritage ACH recommended several conditions for the protection of Aboriginal heritage which have been incorporated into the recommendation.

The Department notes that in response to the SAR, Heritage NSW and Heritage ACH recommended that the land (Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park) the subject of replacement tree planting be further assessed to ensure that the requirements of the SEARs in relation to environmental heritage and Aboriginal heritage are met. As a result of this, the Applicant provided additional information in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment and Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment Report, which noted the following:

- the area the subject of tree planting is in the vicinity of the following heritage items: Hawthorne Canal Stormwater Channel (Sydney Water s170 register, SHR no. 000140), Haberfield Heritage Conservation Area (IWLEP no. C54), Street trees – avenue of Brush box (IWLEP no. I1083) and Former corner shop and residence (IWLEP no. 1117).
- there would be little to no environmental heritage impacts caused as a result of the tree planting proposed within Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park.
- the area does not contain and is not likely to contain any Aboriginal objects.

The Department is satisfied that the proposed replacement tree planting within Hawthorne Canal Reserve and Darley Road Park does not result in any adverse heritage impacts.

6.4 Traffic, transport and parking

A Traffic, Transport and Accessibility Impact Assessment (TAIA) was submitted as part of the EIS, incorporating a Preliminary Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan and draft GTP, which considers the existing road and pedestrian connections, predicted construction and operational impacts, transport mode share and sustainable transport measures.

Car parking

There is some on-site parking within the site at the southern end of the Oval, which is generally reserved for ground officials and media groups, the food and beverage vendor and other operational staff. Public parking is provided within the existing street network. No changes to the existing public car park immediately to the west of Leichhardt Oval is proposed.

The applicable Development Control Plan (DCP) does not provide a car parking rate for stadiums. Consequently, patron interview questionnaire's and on-street parking surveys were undertaken on match days to understand parking demand in the area around the ground. In summary:

- on average, approximately 82 per cent of patrons arrived by private vehicle and parked nearby.
- on match days the parking in the surrounding streets is between 86 to 95 per cent capacity.

Submissions were received during the EIS exhibition period raising concerns with respect to the traffic generation and the lack of on-site parking in the vicinity of the site. The Department notes that the proposal does not seek to increase the existing capacity of the Oval. Spectators will continue to access the Oval on match days by a mix of public transport, walking and private vehicles.

Although the development proposes no changes to stadium capacity, a draft GTP has been prepared separately to capitalise on the opportunity to encourage modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport and reduce dependence on private vehicles thereby reducing congestion and impacts on on-street traffic and parking in the locality.

GTP

The draft GTP recommends several actions to manage future travel demands associated with use of the development, specifically, these actions seek to reduce reliance on private vehicle trips and comprise the following:

- inclusion of internal wayfinding and signage to direct patrons to nearby public transport options.
- event managers and organisers to coordinate with TfNSW during major events.
- promote use of bicycle parking racks located within the aquatic centre.
- make the Transport Access Guide (TAG) easily accessible to attendees.

In its agency advice, TfNSW requested clarification and/or additional information on various components of the draft GTP concerning: parking management strategy; mode share targets; bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities; implementation plan; monitoring and travel surveys; governance of the GTP; and details to be incorporated into the TAG. The Applicant subsequently revised the GTP at SAR stage, which was reviewed by TfNSW. TfNSW confirmed that the updated GTP is acceptable, subject to a condition of consent requiring it to be updated to reflect any traffic and transport management plans prepared for future large scale events at the subject site, in accordance with the TfNSW Guide to Traffic and Transport Management for Special Events. The Department has recommended an appropriate condition addressing this.

Traffic generation

No changes are proposed to the overall patron capacity. Therefore, vehicle trip generation will not increase above existing levels and impacts to surrounding roads and intersections will remain consistent with existing conditions in this regard.

Construction traffic and parking

The TAIA includes a preliminary Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan (CTPMP) which details key principles, construction vehicle movements, routes of travel, parking and access arrangements and measures to address potential impacts. The preliminary CTPMP is intended to provide a framework within which a future CTPMP can be developed, finalised and implemented. The Department is satisfied that impacts on the road network can be managed and has recommended a condition of consent requiring the preparation of the final CTPMP prior to the commencement of works.

6.5 Other issues

The Department's consideration of other issues is summarised in **Table 9**.

Table 9 | Assessment of other issues

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
Noise and vibration	The EIS was accompanied by a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) that assessed the operational noise and construction noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposal. <u>Construction noise</u> The NVIA details that construction noise is likely to exceed the relevant criteria at the nearest noise	The Department is satisfied that noise impacts generated by the development can be adequately managed and mitigated subject to a condition requiring compliance with the recommendation contained within the NVIA.

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
	sensitive receiver (NCA 6 – Residential and commercial to the south in Lilyfield). The report recommends that a detailed Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan is prepared prior to construction commencing to further detail any required mitigation measures based on the project specific construction stages and equipment. The report also details various specific and general mitigation measures to be implemented. <u>Operational noise</u> With regard to operational noise, the NVIA states that: • there is no change to the overall capacity of the ground, and the proposed development will not result in any discernible change in crowd noise on-site. • the proposed development will have no additional impact with regard to traffic-related noise associated with large scale events compared to the existing development on the site. Traffic noise levels are expected to meet the NSW Road Noise Policy. • the noise impacts associated with the proposed development are not expected to noticeably increase the noise impacts on surrounding residential uses compared to the existing development. • an acoustic assessment of the building services plant should be conducted during the detailed design phase to confirm any noise control measures required.	
Contamination	The application includes a Factual Report on Contamination Testing, a letter of Site Suitability and a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). These investigations have regard to the Long-Term Environmental Management Plan (LTEMP) that has been previously prepared for the site. The material provided concludes that:	The Department has recommended a condition of consent which requires the relevant requirements and mitigation measures of the CEMP and LTEMP to be implemented.

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
	• there are some potential contaminants present in the soils, including some asbestos likely associated with building debris. • the CEMP has been prepared with regard to the specific control measures of the LTEMP, including for asbestos management, and will govern the overall contamination management strategy of the proposed development during construction. The CEMP identifies potential contamination exposure pathways for workers of the ground during construction phase works and long term use and provides appropriate mitigation measures to manage these potential pathways. • the site is suitable for the proposed development and continued recreational use subject to the implementation of the: ○ CEMP during the construction phase. ○ LTEMP during ongoing recreational use of the subject site as part of Leichhardt Oval.	
Stormwater management	An Integrated Water Management Plan and Infrastructure Services Delivery Plan was submitted with the EIS, which propose hydraulic and stormwater services and appropriate mitigation measures to manage stormwater catchment, re-use and discharge.	The Department has recommended conditions requiring the development to comply with the stormwater design, relevant Australian Standards and industry best practice guidance.
Flooding	The EIS was accompanied by a Flood Statement, which identifies that the Leichhardt Oval site is located outside of flood prone land and is unaffected by both mainstream and overland flooding. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will not impact on the flood characteristics of the surrounding area and will not cause any impacts on adjoining properties or infrastructure. Agency advice received by CPHR confirms that no further consultation is required regarding flood risk management.	No conditions necessary.

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
Signage	The application seeks approval for new wayfinding signage within the existing Oval. None of the proposed signage is illuminated or for advertising purposes. The signage has been assessed against the requirements of State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021 at Appendix C .	The Department has recommended conditions requiring the signage to be installed prior to the commencement of operation.
Services and utilities	Integrated Water Management Plan and Infrastructure Services Delivery Plan was submitted with the EIS. It concluded that essential services are available	The Department recommends conditions requiring approvals be obtained from the relevant authorities.
Social impacts	A Social Impact Assessment accompanied the EIS, prepared in accordance with the Department's Social Impact Assessment Guideline. The most significant negative impacts are associated with construction activities and relate to temporary traffic, noise and contamination exposure risks. However, the proposal would have an overall positive social impact and will reinforce the cultural significance of Leichhardt Oval whilst improving spectator amenity and accessibility.	The Department has recommended conditions that relate to managing construction related impacts.
Pedestrian access	No change to the existing pedestrian access arrangements to the site are proposed. Pedestrian access to the site will continue to utilise the surrounding local street network, particularly along Mary Street from the Leichhardt North light rail stop, Glover Street and regular bus services along Perry Street.	No conditions necessary.
Development contributions	The Inner West Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan 2023 is not applicable to the proposed development as the proposal is Excluded development in accordance with section 1.3 of the Plan as it is <i>Development undertaken by or on behalf of Council</i> .	No conditions necessary.

7 Evaluation

The Department has reviewed the EIS, SAR and assessed the merits of the proposal, taking into consideration advice from the public authorities and public submissions. The Department's assessment of the project concludes that the key issues raised are built form and urban design, tree removal and landscaping, heritage and traffic, transport and parking.

The proposed refurbishment has been designed to meet modern stadium standards, accommodate the needs of players, media and spectators and comply with accessibility requirements. The height, bulk and external presentation of the Western Grandstand, Northern Grandstand and lower seating bowl respond well to the existing improvements and overall site context.

The Department accepts that the position of the new Northern Grandstand does not permit all of the existing trees at the northern end of the site to be retained. However, the proposed development ensures that a row of Hills Weeping Fig Trees is retained at the rear of the proposed new Northern Grandstand. The height of the Northern Grandstand is below the top of these trees to retain the existing character of the Oval with a vegetated backdrop. The proposal would not result in any adverse impacts with respect to built heritage or historical archaeology.

The proposal does not seek to increase the existing capacity of the Oval. Spectators will continue to access the Oval on match days by a mix of public transport, walking and private vehicles. Further, a GTP has been prepared separately to capitalise on the opportunity to encourage modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport and reduce dependence on private vehicles thereby reducing congestion and impacts on on-street traffic and parking in the locality.

Based on its assessment, the Department considers that the project is justified and in the public interest, and that the site is suitable for the proposed development.

Overall, the Department concludes that impacts of the development are acceptable and can be appropriately managed or mitigated through the implementation of recommended conditions of consent. Consequently, the Department has formed the opinion:

- the development is in the public interest.
- the project should be approved subject to conditions.

8 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Director, Social Infrastructure Assessments, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report.
- **accepts and adopts** the findings and recommendations in this report as the reasons for making the decision to grant consent to the application.
- **agrees** with the key reasons for approval listed in the notice of decision.
- **grants consent** for the application in respect Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment (SSD-85149459) as amended, subject to the conditions in the attached development consent.
- **signs** the attached development consent (**Appendix D**).

Recommended by:



Patrick Nash
Senior Planning Officer
Social Infrastructure

Recommended by:



Megan Fu
A/Team Leader
Social Infrastructure

9 Determination

The recommendation is **adopted** by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Gibson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

24 July 2026

David Gibson

A/Director

Social Infrastructure Assessments

Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
CPHR	Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group
Council	Inner West Council
Department	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EDC	Estimated Development Cost
EIS	Environmental impact statement
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
EPI	Environmental planning instrument
ESD	Ecologically sustainable development
Heritage ACH	Heritage NSW – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
LEP	Local environmental plan
Minister	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Planning Systems SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021
SEARs	Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
Secretary	Secretary of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
SEPP	State environmental planning policy
SSD	State significant development
TfNSW	Transport for NSW

Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of key amendments to the project

Since lodgement, some key aspects of the project have been amended as part of the Applicant's SAR. A summary of the key amendments is provided in **Table A1**.

Table A1 | Key amendments

Aspect	Amended project
Off set tree planting	• Replacement tree planting along the Greenway, Darley Road Park and Hawthorne Canal Reserve, which incorporates additional land to the subject SSD application. • A total of 33 new canopy trees is proposed to be planted in groupings.
Stadium design changes	• Design changes to the south western forecourt, Western Grandstand, Northern Grandstand and materials and finishes. This includes changes to the: ○ stair design at the southern end of the Western Grandstand. ○ Northern Grandstand to reconfigure the amenities and placement of food and beverage facilities, simplify the vertical circulation, provide clearer wayfinding and reduce the extent of the elevated rear deck.

Appendix B – List of referenced documents

The following supporting documents and supporting information to this assessment report can be found on the Department's website as follows:

1. Environmental Impact Statement

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/leichhardt-oval-refurbishment>

2. Submissions and agency advice

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/leichhardt-oval-refurbishment>

3. Submissions and Amendment Report

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/leichhardt-oval-refurbishment>

Appendix C – Statutory considerations

Objects of the EP&A Act

A summary of the Department's consideration of the relevant objects (found in section 1.3 of the EP&A Act) are provided in **Table C1**.

Table C1 | Objects of the EP&A Act and how they have been considered

Object	Consideration
(a) to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources,	• The proposal involves the improvement of an existing stadium, providing for a range of social and economic benefits. • The proposal would increase operational employment opportunities. • The development would not negatively impact on the economic welfare of the community, or the State's natural resources. • The proposal has been designed to minimise impacts on the State's natural and built resources, where possible.
(b) to promote the supply, delivery and maintenance of housing, including affordable housing,	• Not applicable.
(c) to promote productivity through the development and management of the State and its resources,	• The
(d) to protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened species of native animals and plants and ecological communities and their habitats,	• The development would not adversely impact on any native animals or plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats.
(e) to promote resilience to climate change and natural disasters through adaptation, mitigation, preparedness and prevention,	• The proposal is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on climate change.
(f) to promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage, including Aboriginal cultural.	• The proposal would not adversely impact upon any built or cultural heritage as discussed in Section 6.

Object	Consideration
(g) to promote good design, amenity and the proper construction and maintenance of built environments, including the protection of the health and safety of occupants of buildings,	• The application includes a review of the proposed development against the Building Code of Australia (BCA), which concludes that the development can comply with the BCA requirements, either via Deemed to Satisfy Provisions or through the preparation of Performance Solutions to demonstrate compliance. • The Department has considered the proposed development and has recommended a number of conditions of consent to ensure construction and maintenance is undertaken in accordance with legislation, guidelines, policies and procedures (Appendix D).
(h) to provide opportunities for participation in environmental planning and assessment,	• The Department publicly exhibited the proposal, notifying adjoining and surrounding landowners. The EIS and SAR were made available on the Department's website.
(i) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment,	• The proposal includes measures to deliver ecologically sustainable development (ESD), as detailed after this table.
(j) to promote a proportionate and risk-based approach to environmental planning and assessment,	• The Department has undertaken a proportionate and risk-based approach to the assessment of the subject SSD.
(k) to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land.	• No concerns are raised with respect to the orderly and economic use of land.

Ecologically sustainable development

The EP&A Act adopts the definition of ESD found in 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 precautionary principle.
- inter-generational equity.
- conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.
- improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.

The Department required the Applicant to demonstrate how the principles of ESD have been incorporated into the project, including how it addresses:

- national best practice sustainable building principles to improve environmental performance and reduce ecological impact.
- projected climate change impacts.

The application proposes ESD initiatives and sustainability measures, including:

- low carbon materials.
- preparation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan to set environmental performance targets.
- efficient water systems to reduce potable water use.
- passive design techniques to reduce heating, ventilation and cooling requirements.
- energy efficient lighting, retention of existing PV system on the Western Grandstand roof.
- selection of products with low VOC content.
- off set tree planting to enhance biodiversity.

EP&A Regulation

The EP&A Regulation requires the Applicant to have regard to the *State Significant Development Guidelines* when preparing their application. In addition, the SEARs require the Applicant to have regard to the following:

- *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects*
- *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects*

The Department is satisfied that the Applicant has demonstrated the application has been prepared having had regard to the guidelines outlined above.

Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs)

To satisfy the requirements of section 4.15(a)(i) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), this report includes references to the provisions of EPIs that govern the carrying out of the project and have been taken into consideration in the Department's assessment.

Controls considered as part of the proposal are:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP).
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021 (Industry and Employment SEPP).
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 (Resilience and Hazards SEPP).
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 (Sustainable Buildings SEPP).
- Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021

Chapter 2 of the Planning Systems SEPP identifies State significant development (SSD). An assessment of the development against the relevant provisions of the Planning Systems SEPP is provided in **Table C2**.

Table C2 | Planning Systems SEPP compliance table

Relevant Sections	Consideration and Comments	Complies
2.1 Aims of Policy The aims of this Policy are as follows: (a) to identify development that is State significant development	The proposed development is identified as SSD.	Yes
2.6 Declaration of State significant development: section 4.36 (1) Development is declared to be State significant development for the purposes of the Act if: a) the development on the land concerned is, by the operation of an environmental planning instrument, not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, and b) the development is specified in Schedule 1 or 2.	The proposed development is permissible with development consent.	Yes

Relevant Sections	Consideration and Comments	Complies
Schedule 1 State significant development — general 13 Cultural, recreation and tourist facilities (1) Development that has an estimated development cost of more than \$30 million for any of the following purposes — (a) film production, the television industry or digital or recorded media, (b) convention centres and exhibition centres, (c) entertainment facilities, (d) information and education facilities, including museums and art galleries, (e) recreation facilities (major), (f) zoos, including animal enclosures, administration and maintenance buildings, and associated facilities.	The proposal is for a recreation facility (major) with an estimated development cost of more than \$30 million.	Yes

State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021

The Industry and Employment SEPP applies to all signage that can be displayed with or without development consent and is visible from any public space or public reserve. The Department has assessed the proposed signage against the relevant requirements in **Table C3** and the specific assessment criteria of Schedule 5 of the Industry and Employment SEPP in **Table C4**.

Table C3 | Industry and Employment SEPP compliance table - signage

Clause(s)	Assessment Criteria	Comments	Complies
Part 3.2 Signage generally			
3.6 Granting of consent to signage	The signage is to be consistent with the objectives of this policy.	The proposal includes provision of six stadium identification signage zones. The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Industry and Employment SEPP, is compatible with the desired amenity and visual character of the area and provides effective communication and public benefit.	Yes
	The signage is to satisfy the assessment criteria in Schedule 5.	See Table C4.	Yes

Table C4 | Industry and Employment SEPP Schedule 5 assessment criteria table - signage

Assessment Criteria	Consideration and Comments	Complies
1 Character of the area		
Is the proposal compatible with the existing or desired future character of the area or locality in which it is proposed to be located?	The proposal is compatible with the existing character of the area and is not expected to have any adverse impacts.	Yes
Is the proposal consistent with a particular theme for outdoor advertising in the area or locality?	The proposal is compatible with the existing character of the site and surrounding area.	Yes
2 Special areas		
Does the proposal detract from the amenity or visual quality of any environmentally sensitive areas, heritage areas, natural or other conservation areas, open space areas, waterways, rural landscapes or residential areas?	The signage identification zones will not adversely impact the significance of any environmentally sensitive areas or heritage items.	Yes
3 Views and vistas		
Does the proposal obscure or compromise important views?	The signage zones are attached to the East and West Stands, facing out of the site towards the east and west. The Department is satisfied the proposal would not significantly obscure or compromise any important views.	Yes
Does the proposal dominate the skyline and reduce the quality of vistas?	The signage zones would not unreasonably dominate the skyline or reduce the quality of vistas.	Yes
Does the proposal respect the viewing rights of other advertisements?	The signage zones are not proposed in proximity to any advertisements and would therefore not impact on the viewing rights of advertisers.	Yes
4 Streetscape, setting or landscape		
Is the scale, proportion and form of the proposal appropriate for the streetscape, setting or landscape?	The signage zones are modest for the size of the site and the scale of the proposed stadium. The signage zones would not detract from the character of the streetscape or setting.	Yes

Assessment Criteria	Consideration and Comments	Complies
Does the proposal contribute to the visual interest of the streetscape, setting or landscape?	The signage zones would complement the built form.	Yes
Does the proposal reduce clutter by rationalising and simplifying existing advertising?	The signage zones are located on the East and West Stands and would not result in visual clutter.	
Does the proposal screen unsightliness?	The signage zones would not screen unsightliness.	Yes
Does the proposal protrude above buildings, structures or tree canopies in the area or locality?	The signage zones would not protrude above any buildings, structures or tree canopies.	Yes
Does the proposal require ongoing vegetation management?	No ongoing vegetation management is needed.	Yes
5 Site and building		
Is the proposal compatible with the scale, proportion and other characteristics of the site or building, or both, on which the proposed signage is to be located?	The signage zones are compatible with the scale and proportion of the proposed building.	Yes
Does the proposal respect important features of the site or building, or both?	The signage zones contextually appropriate with the scale of the stadium and respect the features of the site.	Yes
Does the proposal show innovation and imagination in its relationship to the site or building, or both?	The purpose of the signage zones is to identify the site/building.	Yes

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

The application includes a Factual Report on Contamination Testing, a letter of Site Suitability and a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). These investigations have regard to the Long-Term Environmental Management Plan (LTEMP) that has been previously prepared for the site. The material provided concludes that the site is suitable for the proposed development and continued recreational use subject to the implementation of the CEMP during the construction phase and the LTEMP during ongoing recreational use of the subject site.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022

The Sustainable Buildings SEPP aims to encourage the design and delivery of sustainable buildings, including minimise energy consumption, minimise use of potable water, optimise thermal performance and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also aims to ensure assessment is undertaken consistently, sustainability of buildings data is recorded and embodied emissions is monitored.

A consent authority must consider whether the development is designed to: minimise waste; reduce peak demand for electricity; reduce reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical heating and cooling through passive design; generate and store renewable energy; monitor energy consumption; and minimise the consumption of potable water.

The consent authority must also be satisfied the embodied emissions attributable to the development have been quantified and whether the development will minimise the use of on-site fossil fuels, as part of the goal of achieving net zero emissions in New South Wales by 2050.

The Department has assessed the project against the relevant requirements in the Sustainable Buildings SEPP and considers the project has provided the appropriate data regarding embodied emissions, will be fossil fuel-free and has been designed to meet the design considerations stipulated in the Sustainable Buildings SEPP.

Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022 (IWLEP)

The Department has considered all relevant provisions of the IWLEP and concludes that the development complies with the relevant requirement. Consideration of the relevant clauses of the IWLEP is provided in **Table C5**.

Table C5 | Consideration of the IWLEP

IWLEP	Department Consideration
Land Use Table – RE1 Public Recreation	The site is zoned RE1 Public Recreation. Development for the purposes of recreational facilities (major) is permitted with development consent at the site.
Clause 4.3 Height of buildings	The site is not subject to a height limit control.
Clause 4.4 Floor space ratio	An FSR control of 1:1 applies to the lot (Leichhardt Park) that contains Leichhardt Oval. The proposed FSR would be below 1:1 and is therefore compliant.
Clause 5.10 Heritage conservation	Leichhardt Park, including Leichhardt Oval No 1 is listed as an item of environmental heritage (Item no. I1197) under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the IWLEP 2022. In addition to this, four fig trees in Mary Street adjacent to the entrance to Leichhardt Park (Item no. I1201) are also a locally listed heritage item. There are

IWLEP	Department Consideration
	various heritage items in the vicinity of the site. The Applicant has provided a Statement of Heritage Impact, which demonstrates that the works are would not result in any adverse heritage impacts as discussed in Section 6.3 .
Clause 5.21 Flood planning	Leichhardt Oval site is located outside the extent of flood prone land and is unaffected by both mainstream and overland flooding. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will not impact on the flood characteristics of the surrounding area and will not cause any impacts on adjoining properties or infrastructure.
Clause 7.1 Earthworks	The clause provides that the consent authority must consider existing drainage patterns and soil stability, the quality of fill or excavated soil, effects on neighbouring amenity, the source of fill and destination of excavated material, the likelihood of relic disturbance, proximity to waterways or drinking water catchment, appropriate measures to mitigate and manage impacts, and potential impacts on heritage items or archaeological sites. The Department has considered the soil (contamination) and groundwater impacts of the proposal in detail in Section 6 and is satisfied that the development is acceptable, subject to conditions. Further, a condition has been imposed to ensure that any soil brought onto the site is comprised only of virgin excavated natural material, excavated natural material or other materials that meet the requirements of a relevant order and exemption issued by the EPA.
Clause 7.4 Sustainable development	The clause provides that the consent authority must have regard to the principles of sustainable development based on a “whole of building” approach. The Department has considered the sustainability of the proposed development in detail in the Ecologically Sustainable Development section of this appendix, and is satisfied that the development is acceptable, subject to conditions.
Clause 7.7 Servicing	The clause provides that the consent authority must be satisfied that the development will be connected to a reticulated water supply, will have adequate facilities for the removal and disposal of sewage, and that the need for public amenities or public services will be met. The application is accompanied by an Infrastructure Management Plan, which demonstrates the development will be adequately serviced with water, electricity and sewage provision. The Department is satisfied that the development is acceptable.
Clause 7.30 Urban heat	The clause provides that the consent authority must be satisfied that design measures are incorporated to reduce the urban heat island effect.

IWLEP	Department Consideration
	As discussed in Section 6, the proposal includes the planting of 33 trees to replace 13 trees removed. The canopy cover proposed to be removed to accommodate the proposed development is approximately 1,125sqm (about 3 per cent of the total area of the site) and the total canopy cover to be retained within the site is approximately 9,600sqm (about 25 per cent of the site area). The Department is satisfied that the design measures would reduce the urban heat island effect.

Appendix D – Recommended instrument of consent