



Planning &  
Environment

An aerial photograph of a train station platform. A silver and yellow train is stopped at the platform. Several people are visible on the platform, including a man and a woman in the foreground. The platform has a white corrugated metal roof and a tactile paving strip. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

# **Planning guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors**

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# 1. Preamble

Major infrastructure corridor planning is important in ensuring the compatibility of future growth and development of housing and employment opportunities with infrastructure expansion, which is necessary to enable long term, sustainable growth. Major infrastructure corridor planning may involve protecting land within the corridor to avoid encroachment of urban development or conversely planning so that future infrastructure does not inhibit new development opportunities. Planning for major infrastructure corridors also enables future opportunities for co-location of infrastructure.

A 'major infrastructure corridor' in this Guideline refers to the linear corridor of land required to support delivery of major infrastructure at some time in the future. Often land for major infrastructure corridors needs to be earmarked for that purpose long before the infrastructure project is required to be delivered. Major infrastructure corridors are seen by Government as having state or regional significance. This is because they provide services that have state or regional impacts, such as transport (regional and state roads, rail and freight), energy (transmission and larger distribution lines) and water (water supply and transportation) infrastructure.

The NSW Government has recognised the need for a number of long term major infrastructure corridors in the *Long Term Transport Masterplan* and *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, and made a commitment to protect these corridors.

Planning for a major infrastructure corridor is complex for the following reasons:

- Planning for major infrastructure corridors is typically undertaken in phases over many years;
- The exact alignment, mode or type of infrastructure required within the corridor may not be certain for many years or decades; and
- A range of variables can influence final infrastructure outcomes and the timing of infrastructure project delivery. This can include a change of housing and job growth rates within NSW, consumer and user behavioural change, and advances in technology.

Once the Government has committed to progress a major infrastructure corridor, the planning system is used to assess corridor options, secure land requirements for the corridors and support processes that progress delivery of the infrastructure project.

## 2. Introduction

This Guideline has been prepared as a guide to infrastructure agencies advising on the planning mechanisms available in the NSW planning system at different phases of the corridor planning lifecycle to facilitate protection of major infrastructure corridors (referred to as the ‘corridor’ in this Guideline). This Guideline deals with the procedural process for planning for corridors and implementing protections, such as facilitating better land use planning outcomes and creating statutory protections on land within identified corridors, and the development approval process for major infrastructure.

In this Guideline, the advice has been structured under distinct ‘phases’ involved in the corridor planning process. This Guideline matches the most appropriate planning mechanisms to each of the relevant corridor planning phases and directs that appropriate strategic or statutory mechanisms are applied, which are relevant to the objectives for the specific corridor.

Following this Guideline will enable agencies to prepare a supporting evidence base for a project that contains the right level of information and detail, which is commensurate with the decision-making undertaken in each distinct phase of the corridor planning process. This means that detailed information on projects is only required when infrastructure delivery is certain.

This Guideline is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather provides guidance to infrastructure agencies on the potential planning mechanisms available and the Department of Planning and Environment’s recommended approach to applying these mechanisms. Infrastructure agencies may continue to use any of the planning mechanisms available within the planning system for different phases of corridor planning. The final process will be specific to each corridor and the Department of Planning and Environment can assist with determining this process.

### 3. Corridor lifecycle phases – Summary

Major infrastructure corridor planning for the purpose of this Guideline has been broken down into distinct phases. Each of these phases is a step in progressing a project from the identification of a need, to the investigation of options and design and identifying land requirements, to delivery. There are planning mechanisms available at each phase of the corridor lifecycle that can progress the corridor planning process to enable infrastructure project delivery at the end.

Not every major infrastructure project may necessarily follow the phases in the corridor lifecycle in a linear way. There are no set timeframes for each phase, rather the progression of each phase is dependent on agencies, the processes required for each corridor, and the delivery program for the project.

**Table 1: Phases identified in the corridor lifecycle**

Phase	Description	Phase objective	Planning mechanism	Planning guideline reference
Strategic planning – identification	Strategic planning in this phase leads to the identification of the need for a new or enhanced service or connection. Through this process a corridor required to support a potential infrastructure outcome is identified	Government and the community have oversight on future major infrastructure corridors across portfolios	Strategic planning	Section 4.1 (pg. 6)
Corridor planning and protection	Planning for the corridor, such as investigation of corridor alignment and design options for project delivery, can inform identification of land requirements for the final corridor	Assess alignment options for the corridor and infrastructure project and identify the preferred alignment. Create the necessary statutory protections on land to enable project delivery	Statutory planning to protect the preferred corridor alignment	Section 4.2 (pg. 8)
Infrastructure delivery	Infrastructure project delivery processes which includes detailed environmental assessment and construction	Deliver the infrastructure project	Environmental assessment	Section 4.3 (pg. 11)

## 4. Corridor lifecycle phases – Description

This section provides a detailed description of each phase in the corridor planning process and an outline of the planning mechanisms available, as well as the processes the Department of Planning and Environment can provide assistance with, to progress each phase.

### 4.1 Strategic planning phase

#### Description

The strategic planning phase results in the early identification of the corridor. Agencies identify the 'strategic need' to expand an existing infrastructure network or the identified need has emerged from analysis of Government growth projections.

Government strategic plans, such as the Department of Planning and Environment's Regional Plans (including *A Plan for Growing Sydney*) and District Plans and Transport for NSW's *Long Term Transport Masterplan*, are currently the main sources for identifying future major infrastructure corridors. Government endorsement of a corridor is required, whether through a separate assessment process or via the endorsement of a strategic plan that identifies the future corridor.

#### Objectives

- Provide Government with oversight on all future corridors and corridor needs;
- Provide justification for the strategic need of the corridor as part of Government strategic planning; and
- Consider appropriate corridor locations at a macro level to allow for integration between the identified corridor and surrounding land uses.

#### Agency focus

The strategic planning process allows for the identification of long term needs to expand existing infrastructure networks to meet growing and/or changing demands on servicing or to identify a commitment to investigate this need.

The Department of Planning and Environment can work together with infrastructure agencies through the strategic planning process to identify the indicative location of the corridor as well as identify some high level land use integration considerations. Often an indicative alignment of the corridor is shown (ie. from 'x' point to 'y' point).

#### Planning mechanisms

The Department of Planning and Environment produces strategic plans, such as Regional Plans and District Plans, to identify long term strategies for places that consider growth and change, the potential implications of growth and change on infrastructure, and provide direction on balancing land use requirements into the future.

The decision to identify a corridor within a Department of Planning and Environment strategic plan can enable the consideration of the corridor in context of other future land use planning decisions. This means that future long term land uses can take account of the potential needs of the corridor, and the general location of the corridor can be informed by the future projected growth and settlement patterns and vice versa. Inclusion in a strategic plan encourages 'macro' integration of future land uses and corridors. Identification of the corridor within a strategic plan also supports the 'strategic justification' of the corridor and confirms Government's commitment to investigate the project.

## Implications of planning mechanisms

### **Implications on land**

Inclusion of a corridor within a strategic plan, such as a Regional Plan or District Plan, identifies the Government's intention to investigate an existing or proposed corridor and articulates the strategic need for long term network expansion within an area. Specific lots of land that may be affected by a corridor are not identified in this phase. Corridors should only be identified as indicative alignments.

There are no direct immediate implications for any land owners. Specific land owners would not be able to rely on the owner-initiated acquisition provisions of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* as the land required for the corridor is not yet defined. Similarly there is no protection of the corridor, as a result of it being identified in a strategic plan.

### **Public engagement**

Specific consultation on the corridor, either by the agency or the Department of Planning and Environment, need not be undertaken. The corridor will be one of many elements of the strategic land use plan, and any specific comments received regarding the corridor would be considered alongside all other issues raised as part of the consultation processes for the strategic land use plan.

### **Agency responsibilities**

Once a corridor is identified in a strategic land use plan that is made public, an agency should be prepared to respond to possible queries that may arise in relation to the corridor.

There is not intended to be any financial implications of corridor identification and no formal protection is created as a result of corridor identification. The Government, with the agency, may decide to progress the project from strategic planning and identification to the corridor planning and protection phase to investigate corridor alignment and design options for the infrastructure project.

### **Statutory implications**

The identification of a corridor in a strategic land use plan in itself does not create statutory protection for the corridor under planning legislation. This is because a strategic land use plan cannot identify the corridor down to the specific lots that are affected. Nothing prevents future urban development from encroaching on land required for the corridor. The identification of a corridor in a strategic land use plan will not affect how a development application (DA) in or around the corridor is assessed, nor create additional criteria for assessment and/or additional limitations on the development that is allowed to occur.

## 4.2 Corridor planning and protection

### Description

The corridor planning and protection phase refers to an agency's processes of planning and investigation of options to progress the infrastructure project from identification to a project for delivery. The corridor planning and protection phase can commence once a decision has been made by Government.

The decision to progress is often advocated by the agency. Corridor protection may become necessary when the options for delivering the infrastructure project become more constrained due to urban expansion or the cost of delivering the infrastructure project is potentially unfeasible if the corridor is not protected.

Through the development and investigation of options, the land requirements to support the infrastructure project can be identified. All public consultation on corridor options will be led by the agencies. It is the agencies responsibility to provide sufficient detail about the corridor options at this time, so that the community can be informed about the implications of each option and is given the opportunity to participate in the process of determining the preferred corridor alignment. Once the preferred alignment has been identified and assessed, statutory protections can be created which can assist delivery of the infrastructure project in the future

The Department of Planning and Environment prepares the legal framework that creates statutory protections for a corridor. Statutory protections for a corridor can be created to reserve a corridor. Reservation is when land is rezoned in the corridor for a public purpose, such as for infrastructure.

Statutory protections for a corridor can be created in an environmental planning instrument, such as a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) or a Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

### Objectives

- Investigate and assess options relating to the corridor alignment and design of the infrastructure project;
- Consider integration of the corridor, and future use of the corridor for an infrastructure project, with surrounding land uses;
- Identify the potential land requirements needed to deliver the infrastructure project;
- Seek Government endorsement of a preferred corridor alignment, supported by a consistent assessment approach based on the Strategic Environmental Assessment template; and
- Support the feasibility and future deliverability of the infrastructure project through statutory protection of the corridor.



## Agency focus

In order to create statutory protections, an agency must have as a minimum, an understanding of alignment options for the corridor, including identifying the land holdings potentially affected, and provide a sufficient level of evidence to the Department of Planning and Environment to justify preparation of an environmental planning instrument to reserve a corridor.

The process for creating statutory protections is commenced by agencies when they inform the Department of Planning and Environment that they seek to protect a particular corridor. To support this process, the Department of Planning and Environment will require agencies to prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the corridor.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment will form the strategic justification of a proposed infrastructure corridor when strategic protection is being sought and will be subject to public consultation, as part of the supporting materials for the draft statutory instrument. Thus the adequacy (fit for purpose) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment will need to be considered before it goes to Government as the strategic justification of the preferred corridor.

There are likely to be financial impacts for the agency of this planning stage, including some potential land acquisition costs, noting that the majority of land acquisitions are likely to occur at the project delivery stage. Agencies should identify the likely implications of land acquisition and the funding sources, prior to commencing the creation of statutory protections.

## Planning mechanisms

An environmental planning instrument, such as a SEPP or LEP, is a statutory instrument that outlines what kinds of development are allowed to be carried out in specific locations. In an environmental planning instrument, controls can be drafted specifically for each corridor and can be unique to the requirements in each situation. The environmental planning instrument must identify the land to which reservation applies and show a map of the corridor that is under statutory protection. The environmental planning instrument may include specific considerations for land adjoining the corridor so that future development adjoining the corridor does not adversely affect the future functioning of the infrastructure project. The Department of Planning and Environment will work closely with the agency throughout the process of preparing an environmental planning instrument.

For major infrastructure corridors that have state or regional impacts, the Department of Planning and Environment recommends creating a specific SEPP for the corridor. The corridor specific SEPP will include the necessary planning controls needed to reserve the preferred corridor alignment. This SEPP will not continue to operate as a stand-alone planning instrument rather it will operate to amend and update all existing relevant environmental planning instruments. It can affect one local government area or can operate across numerous local government areas. Once the legal protections for the corridor are transferred into the relevant local or state environmental planning instruments, the SEPP will be repealed automatically. Any further amendments to these controls would require a further planning instrument to be made, such as a new SEPP or direct amendments to the LEP.

This approach seeks to improve efficiency in the planning process by removing the potential for numerous layers of local and state controls. It also delivers better integration of the future corridor into existing and future environmental planning instruments.

## Implications of planning mechanisms

### **Implications on land**

The reserved corridor would be shown on a map in the relevant environmental planning instrument. This means that landowners, and future landowners, can identify whether a reservation applies to their land within the protected corridor. The reservation can impact on future development that will be allowed to occur on the land within the protected corridor. The change of zoning will also be identified in any property title searches, include on planning certificates issued under section 149 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

An acquisition authority will also be identified for land that is reserved.

### **Public engagement**

The Department of Planning and Environment will engage all affected stakeholders, including local government and landowners, as part of the preparation of the SEPP for the corridor. It is also a requirement that the draft SEPP, and all supporting material including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, be subject to public consultation. Normally public consultation includes a public exhibition period for a minimum of 28 days.

### **Agency responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of agencies to notify the Department of Planning and Environment when they would like to create statutory protections for a corridor. To create statutory protections, an agency must have progressed the corridor identification to a level where there is sufficient understanding and justification of the land requirements to support delivery of the infrastructure project. Agencies will be required to prepare and submit to the Department of Planning and Environment a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Strategic Environmental Assessment provides an assessment of the environmental, economic and social impacts of reserving the corridor. It should include justification for the preferred corridor alignment, including an agency assessment of alternative corridor alignments.

The Department of Planning and Environment will utilise the Strategic Environmental Assessment when preparing the draft SEPP, including determining the appropriate statutory controls to protect the preferred corridor alignment. This Strategic Environmental Assessment will also be made public as a part of the public consultation process.

Therefore the Department of Planning and Environment will need to consider whether the Strategic Environmental Assessment is fit for purpose before any decision of Government to endorse a preferred corridor alignment.

The matters for consideration that may need to be addressed through a Strategic Environmental Assessment can be found in Attachment A. Attachment A is a template only, and the matters of consideration that will need to be included in a Strategic Environmental Assessment for a corridor will be tailored to the requirements for that specific corridor.

### ***Statutory implications***

Protection of a corridor (reservation) applies statutory controls to land. This outlines the types of development that can be carried out on land within or adjacent to the corridor.

Through creating a reservation, the agency must also identify an acquisition authority for the land that is reserved. This then automatically triggers owner-initiated acquisition provisions under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*.

## **4.3 Delivery of infrastructure phase**

### **Description**

The delivery of infrastructure phase involves committing to the final design of the infrastructure project, identifying the program for delivering the project, which includes the assessment process, and construction of the infrastructure project. In this phase the corridor is now defined as a detailed project by the agency, and a project budget has been allocated for delivery.

The infrastructure projects will be assessed under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* and approval for the project may be granted in accordance with the Act. This allows work for the infrastructure project to commence.

### **Objective**

- Mitigate and manage the environmental impacts of the infrastructure project; and
- Deliver the infrastructure project.

### **Agency focus**

The agency will be required to provide detailed information about the final alignment of the corridor and environmental assessment of the proposed infrastructure project.

This will include the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS), which identifies and assesses the environmental, social and economic impacts of the project. This will be used to inform the assessment of the project under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*.

If the corridor is reserved, then components of the EIS, such as the strategic justification for the project and justification for the corridor alignment may already have been assessed such that there is no need to be re-examined through the EIS process. As a result, the scope of the EIS will be focussed on the proposed infrastructure project, its proposed construction and operation.

The pathway of assessment and the consent authority for the project depends on the infrastructure project. In some instances, agencies will perform self-assessment of an infrastructure project under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*.

## Planning mechanisms

An infrastructure project must be assessed under the relevant sections of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* prior to work being carried out. There are currently a number of avenues of assessment, and environmental assessment for a major infrastructure project can either be carried out by Department of Planning and Environment (under delegation by the Minister for Planning), or by the infrastructure agency.

## Implications of planning mechanisms

### **Implications on land**

If approval for the infrastructure project is granted, agencies will be able commence construction of the project subject to any conditions of the approval. If an approval has been granted, some road and rail projects will also be identified as road or rail corridors under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007*. Additional protections include some implications for land adjoining to avoid development that may prevent the approved infrastructure project from operating as intended.

### **Public engagement**

Consultation will be undertaken at a number of stages through the development assessment process in accordance with the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*. Land owners within and adjacent to the corridor will have the opportunity to comment during the consultation carried out as part of obtaining approval for the infrastructure project.

### **Agency responsibilities**

The agency must be able to provide a detailed level of information to support the environmental assessment of the project and be ready to deliver the project.

### **Statutory implications**

The infrastructure project must be assessed, and determination sought, under the relevant sections of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*. If an approval has been granted, some road and rail projects will also be identified as road or rail corridors under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007*.

## 4.4 Other processes in corridor planning

The following processes may occur at any phase in the corridor lifecycle and can apply across different phases. These processes can be conducted independently but may create additional considerations for specific phases in the corridor lifecycle.

## 4.4.1 Land acquisition

### Description

Land within a corridor may be acquired over time and at any phase of the corridor planning process. Land acquisition includes the acquisition of land via property title and acquisition via an easement. This process may be managed by the agency responsible for the infrastructure project or by another agency of their behalf.

Acquisition can either occur through negotiated agreements, through compulsory acquisition, or through owner-initiated acquisition. Owners may only initiate acquisition in cases of hardship subject to the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* and other relevant legislation (such as the *Roads Act 1993*) or where an agreement has been reached with the acquisition authority.

### Agency focus

Details of compulsory acquisitions may be required as a part of a planning approval, and provided when seeking planning approval.

### Planning mechanisms and role of the Department of Planning and Environment

The Office of Strategic Lands is a business unit within the Department of Planning and Environment. The Office of Strategic Lands' primary role is to administer the Planning Minister's Corporation (Corporation Sole) and manage the Sydney Region Development Fund. The Corporation Sole and the Sydney Region Development Fund were both established under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The Office of Strategic Lands' functions include the ability to acquire and transfer land to other State and local Government agencies to achieve planning and public benefit outcomes, including infrastructure corridors.

There is an opportunity for the Office of Strategic Lands to support Government in the process of land acquisition for infrastructure corridors, as required.

## 4.4.2 Land holding and management

### Description

Land holding and management applies when land has been acquired by the infrastructure agency, but is not yet being used for the infrastructure project.

### Agency focus

Management of the holding phase is the agency's responsibility as land owners. Agencies are recommended to consider and identify appropriate interim uses for the corridor during the corridor planning and protection phase. Interim uses are land uses that are appropriate temporary land uses that can be carried out whilst the land is not being used for the infrastructure project or surplus to the project.

Where applicable, appropriate interim land uses will need to be identified as a part of the corridor planning and protection phase to include these as permissible uses in the drafting of the environmental planning instrument. For this reason, it is recommended that agencies consider potential interim uses at the corridor planning and protection phase as a part of the Strategic Environment Assessment.

Interim land uses can also be managed by the acquiring agency, by restricting development and use of land within the terms of a lease back to the former owner, or through owner's consent to development applications on the land. Agencies may choose to prepare a management plan for interim uses for the infrastructure corridor, which identifies appropriate development and uses of land that will not impact on the future use of the corridor for infrastructure.

### **Planning mechanisms and role of the Department of Planning and Environment**

Environmental planning instruments may identify interim permissible uses if created in the corridor planning and protection phase. These continue to have effect as the agency holds and manages land. Any development within the corridor is still subject to a development application as required under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

#### **4.4.3 Ongoing corridor protection**

##### **Description**

Ongoing corridor protection refers to the continuing protection of the corridor from urban development encroachment both before and after construction of the infrastructure project.

##### **Agency focus**

Agencies often require continuing protection of their infrastructure corridor from issues relating to building adjacent to the corridor, or excavating next to the corridor. If ongoing concurrences are required, the agency will need to have resourcing available to provide input to the assessment of development applications and development proposals on land adjacent to or within the corridor.

Ongoing corridor protection may occur as part of asset protection when an infrastructure project has been delivered in the corridor.

### **Planning mechanisms and role of the Department of Planning and Environment**

Consideration may be given in the regional or district plan to providing the need for ongoing protection to corridors. This may include buffer areas through strategic land use planning, as well as protecting the corridors function within the area (i.e. a freight corridor).

There is an opportunity to tailor the ongoing corridor protections to the specific corridor through the creation of a specific environmental planning instrument for the corridor (refer to the corridor planning and protection phase). Environmental planning instruments can provide corridors statutory protection

from encroachment or the effect of construction at the corridor's perimeter. The environmental planning instrument can also provide a requirement that land owners seek concurrence from the agency managing the asset when applying to undertake a new development on land within or adjacent to the corridor.

There are also existing ongoing corridor protections for specific types of corridors (such as road and rail corridors) in the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007*. These protections will continue to apply.

#### **4.4.4 Review and withdrawal of corridor protection**

##### **Description**

Occasionally a corridor may no longer be required, or an alternate solution for the infrastructure project is found. The process for withdrawal of a corridor will depend on its progression through the corridor lifecycle.

##### **Agency focus**

Agencies have a responsibility to continually review their identified and protected corridors and ongoing land requirements. Agencies should advise the Department of Planning and Environment if an identified or reserved corridor is no longer required and give reasons for this decision. All formal identification and protections afforded to the corridor can be removed.

##### **Planning mechanisms and role of the Department of Planning and Environment**

The planning mechanisms that apply to the withdrawal of the corridor will depend on the phase in the corridor lifecycle.

Regional Plans and District Plans undergo a review every five years to take account of population changes and development activity. As a part of this review, identified corridors may be withdrawn or new ones identified.

If land in the corridor has been rezoned for infrastructure, the land may be rezoned again to an appropriate zone for other uses. This would require a further environmental planning instrument to be made.

Consultation will be undertaken as a part of the relevant planning processes.

## ATTACHMENT A. Strategic Environmental Assessment

The *Strategic Environmental Assessment* – Template can be used as a guide to inform infrastructure agencies on the ‘heads of consideration’ that could be considered in developing the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to support corridor protection through ‘reservation’ effected by drafting a new environmental planning instrument.

The agency putting forward the application should consider the necessary impacts and information which would need to be provided to allow Government to make a full and clear assessment. The template below can be used as a starting point from which information can be added or subtracted on a case-by-case basis.



## Strategic Environmental Assessment – TEMPLATE

*Informing the preparation of statutory controls to secure a long term infrastructure corridor*

<b>Project:</b>	<i>[Name of future corridor]</i>
<b>Location:</b>	<i>[General description of the location including a map]</i>
<b>Lead Agency:</b>	<i>[Name of lead agency]</i>
<b>Corridor definition:</b>	A 'corridor' in this document refers to a proposed alignment of the infrastructure corridor (or any corridor alignment options) and any adjacent land which might be affected.
<b>Role of this paper:</b>	This Strategic Environmental Assessment is not a statutory requirement. This outlines information that should be addressed in the process of creating statutory controls for infrastructure corridors. However the onus is on the lead agency to provide sufficient information to support their proposal.
<b>General Requirements:</b>	A Strategic Environmental Assessment is to be prepared as the evidence base to inform the creation of statutory planning controls that reserve land for the purpose of an infrastructure corridor.
<b>Content of the Strategic Environmental Assessment:</b>	<p><b><i>The Strategic Environmental Assessment should address:</i></b></p> <p><b>1. The strategic justification:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an outline of the objectives of the corridor, including a description of the strategic need for infrastructure; and justification, objectives and intended long term outcomes for the proposed future infrastructure. This should take account of existing and proposed transport infrastructure and services within the adjoining districts and regions, and as relevant the outcomes and objectives of relevant strategic planning and transport policies and other major Government infrastructure programs.</li><li>• a strategic analysis of alternative options to the carrying out of the future project and objectives of protecting the corridor. This should include an assessment of the strategic costs and benefits of protecting the corridor relative to alternatives and the consequences of not protecting the corridor.</li></ul>

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## 2. The infrastructure project and its components

- a description of the potential future infrastructure project and its components that may potentially be built in the corridor and therefore affect the design of the corridor alignment, including location and width. This includes all ***[transport example] potential transport modes, such as roads, rail, cycleway, and key interchanges/connections needed and intermodal terminals.***

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## 3. Corridor alignment options

- strategic corridor area scoping and analysis of:
  - » environmental opportunities and constraints within the corridor; and
  - » existing land uses within the corridor area (*This should include consideration of the issues for assessment identified below*).
- identification and strategic assessment of corridor alignment options.

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## 4. Preferred corridor alignment

- a description of the preferred corridor alignment, including:
  - » *add relevant specific details [ie transport - location of likely interchanges, stations and intermodal terminals];*
  - » the relationship and/or interaction with other *[infrastructure]* networks including...
  - » the implications of the preferred corridor alignment (or corridor options if a singular preferred alignment is not known) in relation to the issues for assessment outlined below.
- detail how the preferred corridor alignment integrates with the relevant strategic plan (such as *A Plan to Growing Sydney*), including supporting identified growth objectives and other objectives with the relevant strategic land use plans.

Notwithstanding the issues for assessment specified below, the Strategic Environmental Assessment must include an ***environmental risk analysis*** to identify the potential environmental impacts associated with the preferred corridor alignment.

Where relevant, the assessment of issues listed below, and any other significant issues identified in the risk analysis, must include:

- adequate baseline data;
- consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the land within the corridor due to other existing and future development in the vicinity of the corridor; and
- strategic measure to avoid, minimise and if necessary, offset the predicted impacts or any significant risks to the environment posed by the preferred corridor alignment.

#### Issues for assessment:

The Strategic Environmental Assessment must also address the following specific matters:

**Land use and property impacts** within the corridor and adjacent to the corridor - including but not limited to:

- current land use controls in the corridor;
- potential impacts to residential and industrial lands and impacts to Crown land;
- potential impacts to open space, reservations, national parks;
- potential impacts to agricultural land and production, food security, biosecurity, fishing and aquaculture industries
- potential impacts to extractive, mineral and energy resources
- potential impacts to major utility/transport/gas pipelines/other infrastructure;
- potential impacts on key strategic geographical locations; and
- potential implications of other pieces of legislation that may affect land use or property rights, such as the *Native Title Act 1993*.

**Future land use opportunities** surrounding the corridor:

- commentary on the housing and job growth potential as a result of the project, including identifying likely areas of change and how this aligns with regional and district planning;

- commentary on potential opportunities to effectively integrate new infrastructure with surrounding land uses (either economic, environmental or residential land uses), and how this aligns with regional and district planning; and
- identification of key locations including potential key interchanges and connections with other major future infrastructure projects.

**Economic impacts** of potential future infrastructure as well as potential impacts of limiting current land uses within and around the corridor – including but not limited to:

- commentary on the expected economic growth potential created from the project;
- potential impact on economic growth of failing to deliver the project as planned; and
- impact on related infrastructure projects such as (examples to be given for specific projects).

**Traffic and transport** — including but not limited to:

- details of how the alignment will meet the traffic and transport objectives of the corridor taking into account adjacent sensitive land uses and future growth areas, as identified in existing and proposed strategic plans;
- an assessment and strategic traffic and transport impacts on the regional, State and National road network and local roads (where known), including identifying future extensions to the network made possible by the implementation of the preferred corridor alignment.

**Noise and Vibration** — including but not limited to:

- any location along the corridor or future land uses that may be sensitive to noise or vibration and may be affected by the infrastructure within the corridor.

**Visual Amenity, Built Form and Urban Design** - including but not limited to:

- Identifying strategic visual or built form impacts of the proposed future infrastructure and how these could be mitigated or minimised.

**Soils and Water**— including but not limited to:

- strategic water quality issues to be considered or known impacts including a strategic assessment of:
  - » Potential impact on bulk water supply including water storage locations and major pipelines;
  - » Identification of areas of acid sulphate soils.
- hydrological impacts, including the identification and a strategic assessment of the following:
  - » location and nature of flood regimes affecting the corridor;
  - » any known contaminated land within the corridor.

**Biodiversity** — including but not limited to:

- a strategic assessment of potential ecological impacts of the project, with specific reference to vegetation and habitat clearing, connectivity, edge effects, riparian and aquatic habitat impacts and soil and water quality impacts; and
- the circumstances where future detailed assessments would be required are to be outlined;
- the impacts to adjoining waterways, riparian vegetation and aquatic habitats, including consideration of water quality, marine vegetation, fish passage and habitat, soil types (including salinity), erosion and sedimentation, and ongoing water management;
- avoidance, mitigation and management measures, including details of alternative options considered, and proposed arrangements for long term management;
- details of any offset strategies for ecological impacts and native vegetation clearing, taking into account the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects (Office of Environment and Heritage, 2014).

The assessment should also take into account:

- Impacts on features of High Environmental Value, as described in the relevant Regional Plan;
- Draft Guidelines for Threatened Species Assessment (Department of Environment and Conservation/Department of Primary Industries 2005);

- Threatened Biodiversity Survey and Assessment: Guidelines for Developments and Activities (Department of Environment and Conservation 2004);
- Draft Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management – Update 2013 (Department of Primary Industries 2013); and
- Guidelines for Aquatic Habitat Management and Fish Conservation (Department of Primary Industries 1999).

*Note - A detailed assessment of the ecological impacts should only be undertaken only if the corridor (irrespective of the final alignment) has a known impact.*

**Heritage** – including but not limited to:

- Potential impacts to State and local heritage (including heritage items, conservation areas, and archaeology) and potential impacts to Aboriginal heritage (including cultural and archaeological significance); and
- circumstances where a future detailed assessments would be required are to be outlined.

**Air quality** — including but not limited to:

- potential for impacts on local and regional air quality, including impacts on sensitive receivers.

**Social and economic** — including, but not limited to:

- strategic assessment of the social and economic potential impacts on the community and community facilities directly impacted by the corridor and the future infrastructure project.

**Environmental Risk Analysis** — notwithstanding the above key assessment requirement, the environmental risk analysis must include:

- Identification of potential environmental impacts associated with the future infrastructure planning and the proposed strategic mitigation measures and potentially significant residual environmental impacts after the application of proposed mitigation measures; and
- Where additional key environmental impacts are identified through this environmental risk analysis, an identification of the stage in which issues will be addressed should be identified.

## Consultation:

During the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, there is an expectation that the agency will consult with the relevant local, State and/or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups and affected landowners. This may involve:

- Local, State and Commonwealth government authorities, including engaging with Department of Planning and Environment about the preparation of the District Plans or Regional Plans;
- specialist interest groups, including Local Aboriginal Land Councils, and others such as Aboriginal stakeholders;
- relevant utilities and Environmental Assessment service providers; and
- the public, including community groups and adjoining and affected landowners.

*The Strategic Environmental Assessment should describe the consultation process and the issues raised and identify where the design of the project or the project alignment has been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, a short explanation should be provided.*

## Statutory planning considerations:

**Current planning framework** — The Strategic Environmental Assessment should identify the existing Environmental Planning Instruments that apply to the corridor and relevant sections that will be affected by potential statutory planning controls. This includes identifying all:

- existing Local Environmental Plans within the corridor
- existing relevant State Environmental Planning Policies and structure plans; and
- other relevant plans, policies and strategies

### **Future planning framework –**

- **Statutory:** The Strategic Environmental Assessment may make recommendations on potential draft clauses or instructions for the reservation of the corridor. The Strategic Environmental Assessment may also identify what appropriate interim uses should be considered.
- **Other:** The Strategic Environmental Assessment may make recommendations about appropriate land uses surrounding the corridor for considerations within other planning documents (such as districts plans, structure plans, structure plans or master plans) that are or will be prepared within the corridor.

**Other considerations:**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment may want to identify if there is a proposal in place for:

- voluntary owner-initiated land acquisition for the corridor;
- possible buy back scheme for land for the corridor;
- any implications on property owners or commercial activity that may occur as a result of the corridor;
- any current holding arrangements for those sites;
- any plans for potential interim uses that could be appropriate for acquired sites within the corridor.