PSA CONSULTING

SILVERWEIR POULTRY FARM

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

12 August 2024

Baiada

LAND USE PLANNING | DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS | TRANSPORT PLANNING | TRAFFIC ENGINEERING | PROGAM MANAGEMENT | INFRASTRUCTURE

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Contact: [redacted]

This document has been prepared by:

[redacted]

Contact: [redacted]

REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DETAILS	AUTHOR	AUTHORISATION
V3	12 August 2024	FINAL	[redacted]	[redacted]

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SIGNED DECLARATION

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	Silverweir Poultry Broiler Farm
Address of the land in respect of which the development application is made	448 Appleby Lane, Appleby NSW 2340 17/-/DP95993 18/-/DP95993 19/-/DP95993 161/-/DP560748
APPLICANT DETAILS	
Applicant name	[redacted]
Applicant address	
DETAILS OF PEOPLE BY WHOM THIS EIS WAS PREPARED	
Names and professional qualifications	[redacted]
Address	
DECLARATION	
Name	[redacted]
Registration Number	
Organisation	Planning Institute of Australia
Declaration	The undersigned declares that this EIS: • has been prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*; • contains all available information relevant to the environmental assessment of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the EIS relates; and • does not contain information that is false or misleading.
Signature	[redacted]
Date	12 August 2024

SUMMARY

[redacted] is seeking development consent to develop a new poultry broiler farm on land at 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby. The farm will be comprised of sixteen (16) poultry sheds where meat chicken birds (broilers) will be grown for human consumption. Each shed will accommodate a maximum of 60,000 birds giving the farm a maximum capacity of 960,000 birds. PSA Consulting has been engaged to prepare this Environmental Impact Statement to accompany a Development Application under Part 4 of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Poultry Consumption and Demand

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) reports that total chicken meat consumption in Australia has increased by an average of 5% per annum over the 10 years to 2022-23, representing 45% of total meat consumption. Chicken continues to be the most consumed meat in Australia, increasing over 65% between 2000 (~30kg per person) and 2018 (~50kg per person). Per capita poultry consumption is expected to continue growing to reach around 51.5kg by 2022-23.

In response to the projected demand for poultry products in the Australian marketplace, there is a need to increase production. Baiada sees the New England Region as being an ideal location for expansion and the increase in production capacity. This is due to the existing accumulation of high value poultry assets and geographic, infrastructure and commercial attributes in the region which have created the existing poultry meat cluster.

Baiada's current livestock operations within Tamworth facilitate processing of a maximum of 840,000 birds per week at the existing Out Street Processing facility. Baiada has recently commenced work on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth which will have the capacity to process up to 3 million birds a week. To support the increase in processing, significant increases in all aspects of the poultry cluster will be required. In this regard, it is expected that around 300 additional poultry sheds, within a 2-hour drive of the Oakburn processing plant will be required. The proposed Silverweir Broiler Farm is a direct response to this need to increase broiler supply.

Core Project Objectives

The core objectives of the proposed development are as follows:

- Construction of the Silverweir Poultry Farm consisting of 16 Broiler Sheds with a maximum capacity of 960,000 birds;
- Support expansion of the existing poultry meat cluster within the New England Region; and
- Provide additional meat chickens (broilers) to meet the projected growth in demand for poultry products in Australia.

Project Alternatives

The alternatives to carrying out the development include:

1. Do nothing;
2. Expanding operations on the existing Baiada Farms; and
3. Construction of a poultry farm in an alternate location within the region.

The alternatives to the proposed development do not represent an equally efficient approach to the expansion of broiler farming to meet the forecast growth in demand and supply the approved Oakburn Processing Plant. In addition, due to the increase in broiler production required, the alternatives identified above are already being explored by other growers and will all play a part in growth of the New England poultry cluster.

Further, as demonstrated within the EIS, the proposed development can be undertaken in a manner consistent with applicable environmental and planning safe-guards and standards and as such, the project is clearly the best option to achieve the core objectives.

Land Use Planning and Permissibility

Under the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010,* the subject site is located within the RU1 Primary Production Zone. The development falls under the definition of ***intensive livestock agriculture*** and is Permitted with Consent within the RU1 Zone.

The development falls within the scope of Designated Development under Item 21 Intensive Livestock Agriculture of Schedule 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* and accordingly requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Consultation Activities

In preparing the Environmental Impact Statement consultation has been undertaken with Authorities, Stakeholders and the local community. The consultation provided opportunities for Stakeholders to provide feedback concerning the project which was considered as part of the finalisation of the project design and assessment process.

The consultation undertaken showed that there was general interest in the project and the activities undertaken increased community awareness about the proposed development. Based on the responses, there is mixed support for the project as well as concerns regarding the potential impact on the surrounding properties. These concerns raised from the neighbouring stakeholders have been addressed as part of the project design and assessment processes. Overall, the feedback from the stakeholders have been taken into consideration through the development of this project.

Assessment of Potential Environmental Impacts

An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken which demonstrates that project will not result in any significant on unacceptable detrimental impacts upon the community, economy and receiving environment. Further details on the various assessments undertaken are provided below.

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS
Biodiversity	A Biodiversity Assessment Report has been prepared by Wildthing Environmental Consultant to review the potential biodiversity impacts of the project. The direct impacts of the proposed development include the removal of 17.34ha of cropped land and 0.63ha of disturbed grassland. No threatened ecological communities were observed or likely to be present within the subject land and no threatened flora or fauna species were recorded during fieldwork or past ecological surveys within the impact area or subject site. Accordingly, the project is not forecast to result in unacceptable ecological impacts on any items of significance. Mitigation measures have also been proposed as part of the construction and operation phase to help minimise the potential impacts to biodiversity values that remain present within the study area.
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	A Cultural Heritage Assessment has been undertaken by Ozark Environmental and Heritage to support the proposed new poultry farm in accordance with the Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales and the Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in New South Wales. There were no items or sites of Indigenous cultural heritage or historic heritage found during the site inspection and it was determined that Aboriginal objects will not be harmed by works associated with the proposal. Accordingly, an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit application is not necessary, and development may proceed with caution.
Contamination	A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Database has confirmed that the site is not listed as a contaminated land. In addition, the site has been historically cleared and has been used for cropping, and grazing activities. Based on historic aerial photography, the impact areas associated with the development are located on land that has been in agricultural production since at least 1960 and have not been used of any industrial or rural industry purposes which

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS
	would indicate a risk of contamination. Accordingly, the site is expected to be of minimal risk to contamination.
Stormwater Management	A Stormwater Management Strategy for the proposed poultry farm has been prepared by Hanlons Consulting. Stormwater flows around the poultry farm will be collected via a series of swales running between and then directed through a network of stormwater pits, pipes, and open channels to the open swale drains along either side of the farm. The drains will be fitted with level spreaders to discharge stormwater as overland flows to the paddocks located on low side of the farm. The stormwater was modelled using the DRAINS stormwater modelling package to ensure that there was no worsening of post development flows compared to existing conditions. In this regard, the site was modelled for a range of design storms to cover both the minor and major events. The results show that inter-shed drains function as individual detention structures and result in an overall reduction of the developed flows without the need for a large detention basin. All sheds are constructed on an elevated pad and concrete slab and surrounded by a waterproof blockwork at the base of the insulated panel wall. As such internal shed areas are entirely separated from interaction with stormwater or roof water. The water is therefore expected to be of high quality, similar to the quality of water runoff from the surrounding area, and as such not capable of generating issues of water contamination in waterways or water dependent ecosystems. Rainfall runoff from the shed roofs and from some of the surrounding external surfaces will be directed into the grassed swales running between the sheds and discharged into the external drainage channel surrounding the farm. The grassed swales have a low grade to maximise opportunities for infiltration and stormwater treatment for run-off water entering the swale. As such, the proposed swales between the sheds and as well as the external drainage channel surrounding the farm are expected to provide sufficient water quality treatment to the potential pollutant loads associate with farm operations. Given the controlled environment in which the proposed poultry development will operate, along with the approval and licensing conditions it will need to comply with, the proposed poultry farm will pose a minimal risk with respect to stormwater quality.
Air Quality	An Air Quality Impact Assessment was undertaken by Katestone Environmental Pty Ltd. The assessment reviewed the proposed operations in conjunction with the cumulative impacts from surrounding poultry farms based on the past 5 years of meteorological data. The odour impact assessment results were compared against the relevant odour impact assessment criterion (5 OU (99th percentile, nose-response-time average), specified in the Approved Methods for Modelling. The findings showed that the proposed Silverweir Farm in isolation, complies with the relevant criteria. With consideration of cumulative impacts with the existing Taradale and Gidley farms (again with a conservative k-factor of 2.2 for all farms): • the predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in the model years 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2023. and • In 2021, predicted odour concentrations exceed the criterion at one sensitive receptor (R38). Importantly, cumulative modelling of the Silverweir development with a k-factor of 1.9 (as suggested for new farms in the AgriFutures Guideline, while maintaining the existing Taradale and Gidley farms with a k-factor of 2.2, the predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in all five model years.

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS
	The assessment of dust impacts demonstrates that the farm make minimal contribution to dust emissions, with the modelling dominated by background levels, and negligible changes due to the operation of the farm. The assessment concludes that the proposed Silverweir development is unlikely to cause adverse odour and dust impacts.
Noise Impact Assessment	A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by SoundIN to assess the potential noise impacts of the proposed development against the relevant acoustic criteria. Noise modelling was taken in a conservative approach as recommended by the Noise Policy for Industry. The modelling of proposed construction and operational noise indicated compliance with the conservative noise levels resulting in no impact from the development. Mitigation Measures have been proposed to ensure no impact is maintained.
Traffic	A Traffic Impact Assessment has been prepared by PSA Consulting which reviewed the proposed development and its impacts on the existing road network. It is anticipated that the proposed poultry farm will generate an average of approximately 14 heavy vehicle trips per day (7 incoming / 7 outgoing) and 12 light vehicle trips (6 incoming / 6 outgoing) however some peak periods associated with bird collections, shed clean out and set up occur at the end of each cycle. While a majority of the heavy vehicles will typically occur during the day, bird collections does occur at night. During the night time collection, the heavy vehicles could be up to a maximum of 38 trips (19 incoming / 19 outgoing) on a peak collection night. The proposed development includes the construction of a new driveway consisting of a basic right hand turn and basic left hand turn connecting to Appleby Lane. Modelling of this and other intersections surrounding the farm show that no external upgrades to the road network are proposed or required to service the farm. As a result of their assessment, PSA Consulting has concluded that the proposed poultry farm will not have any unacceptable implications in terms of traffic, servicing or parking implications.
Visual Impacts	Assessment of the local character in response to the potential visual impact was undertaken. The proposed farm is setback 700m to Appleby Lane to the south and 800m to Fairs Road to the west. As a result of these setbacks, the existing roadside vegetation (particularly along Fairs Road), the proposed landscape planting, and the low profile of the proposed sheds, the development is not expected to have a significant visual impact when viewed from the public road network. Similarly, the nearest rural dwelling is located approximately 1,2km to the west of proposed farm and as such the potential visually impact is expected to significant reduced due to the distance, intervening remnant vegetation, and the planted landscape buffers. With consideration of these factors the proposed poultry farm is not expected to significantly change the existing landscape character create or create any unacceptable visual impact. In response to feedback during the consultation process, additional screening and an alternate roof material has been adopted to further reduce the risk of glare.
Chemical use and Storage	A SEPP 33 Screening Assessment and Preliminary Hazard Assessment was undertaken by Lote Consulting Pty Ltd. The screening assessment demonstrates that the quantities of diesel, water treatment chemicals and sanitisers are minor quantities well below the respective screening thresholds in the Applying SEPP 33 Guideline, and are not considered to pose a hazard risk. As the storage of LPG exceeds the specified threshold, a Preliminary Hazard Assessment for LPG is required. The proposed poultry farms require Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in order to provide heating for the birds during the cooler months. The PHA has been prepared based on the proposed storage of LPG on the poultry farm in accordance with the Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory paper (HIPAP) No. 4(2) and No. 6(3). Based on the analysis conducted, it is concluded

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS
	that the risk at the site boundary will not exceed the acceptable risk criteria and as such, the site would only be classified as potentially hazardous development and could proceed subject to development consent. Mitigation measures have also been proposed to minimise and residual risk and ensure dangerous goods are safely used and stored on the site.
Bushfire	A Bushfire Risk Assessment was undertaken by Firebird ecoSultants Pty Ltd. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with the rural Fire Services guidelines with the result requiring the implementation of a 10m asset protection zone for the farm and 50m asset protection zone for the proposed dwellings. Overall, the dwellings have a BAL rating of BAL12.5 with mitigation measures supporting the *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* requirements.
Biosecurity and Animal Welfare	As a leading company for poultry standards, Baiada endorses high standards for animal welfare and biosecurity which follow the procedures and requirements set out in the following documents. • Construct the farm in accordance with the *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds - New Building* Projects by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024). • Operate the poultry farm in accordance with the following documents (or as amended from time to time): - *Minimum Operating Standards Broiler Farming* by Baiada (dated 11 January 2022). - *National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Chicken Growers* produced by the Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc (dated May 2020). - *Baiada National Biosecurity Manual (*dated 19 June 2023). - *National Water Biosecurity Manual – Poultry Production (Department of* Agriculture*, Fisheries and Forestry [DAFF] 2009).* - *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds - New* Building Projects by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024). - *National Animal Welfare Standards for the Chicken Meat Industry (Australian Poultry Cooperate Research Centre [Australian Poultry CRC] 2008).* - *RSPCA* Approved Farming Scheme Standard - Meat Chickens - *AUGUST* 2020 v1.1. - *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Domestic Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2002) (Model Code of Practice).* - *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Land Transport of Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2006).*
Economic and Social Impacts	The development will have a positive economic impact in terms of significant construction works and ongoing employment opportunities for local residents. The estimated development cost of the project is estimated to be $28.503 million, a majority of which is associated with construction of the proposed farm. In this regard, it is estimated that the project will create 20 construction jobs to deliver the project, as well as indirect opportunities for local tradespersons to assist with the build (e.g. electricians, plumbers etc). Once operational, the project will create six (6) full time equivalent (FTE) positions. In addition to the direct employment, the additional farm will create additional opportunities for numerous contractors who support poultry farming including: • Transport Contractors – transporting day old chicks, clean bedding material, poultry feed, live birds, gas, manure and litter; • Live Bird Collection Crews; • Shed cleaning and set up crews; and

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS
	• Local maintenance contractors including electrician and plumbers, etc. With consideration of these employment opportunities, the project will have a positive economic impact and employment impact for the region. With respect to social impacts, the findings of the detailed technical assessments undertaken in relation to proposed farm demonstrate that construction is unlikely to have significant, negative social impacts provided the proposed mitigation and management measures documented in this EIS are implemented. With consideration of the positive impacts, particular in relation to economic investment and local employment opportunities, overall, it is considered that the farm will have a positive social outcome.

Site Suitability

As demonstrated in this EIS, the site specifically, and the New England Region more broadly provides a combination of critical factors which make it an ideal location for construction of a new poultry farm. The primary factor driving the development or a broiler farm in this location is the proximity of the Oakburn Processing Plant, Tangaratta Feed mill, and Country Road Hatchery which make broiler farming on the site very efficient through significant reductions in the transportation lengths. This has significant benefits with respect to reducing transport costs, reducing greenhouse emissions, and improving animal welfare.

The site has been subject to various technical investigations which have a confirmed that there are no site-based, biophysical, cultural or operational constraints which would limit physical development, or operations proposed at the site. Further, technical assessments have also shown that the site is able to be adequately services by the necessary, supporting infrastructure including, water supply, wastewater disposal, power and road networks.

With respect to potential amenity impacts, detailed investigations have been undertaken with respect to noise, odour, social and economic aspects with have shown the proposed development will operate within the relevant statutory criteria and will have positive economic impacts in terms of employment, capital expenditure and local spending on goods and services.

Accordingly, the proposed site is an ideal location for the establishment of a poultry farm.

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APPENDIX LIST

FIGURES

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
CBD	Central Business District
CSI	Contamination Site Investigation
EAD	Emergency Animal Disease
EE	Essential Energy
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPL	Environmental Protection License
EDC	Estimated Development Cost
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
Ha	Hectare
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LLS	Local Land Services
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
NHVR	National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
NSW	New South Wales
OLS	Obstacle Limitation Surface

PBP	Planning For Bushfire Protection
RFS	Rural Fire Service
SEARS	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SSD	State Significant Development
SSDA	State Significant Development Application
TfNSW	Transport for NSW
TN	Total Nitrogen
TP	Total Phosphorus
TRC	Tamworth Regional Council
TRLEP	Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010
TSS	Total Suspended Solids
VPD	Vehicles Per Day

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 APPLICANT DETAILS

The project is being undertaken by [redacted] which is part of the Baiada Group of companies (Baiada) and provides the feed for all Baiada owned poultry facilities in the region. Baiada is a privately owned Australian company which provides premium quality poultry products throughout Australia.

Baiada's operations include broiler and breeder farms, hatcheries, feed mills, feed milling and protein recovery. Baiada's products include the sale of live poultry (including breeding stock), poultry feed, fertile eggs, day old chickens, primary processed chicken (raw) and processed chicken products and pet food. The company has its head office at Pendle Hill, 30km west of Sydney CBD, with operating centres located in New South Wales (including Tamworth), South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Baiada has a current employee base of approximately 7,000 people.

Baiada is the largest producer of poultry meat in Australia and currently supplies approximately 35% of the national demand, currently equating to around 5 million birds per week.

The Applicant's details are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Applicant Details

DECLARATION	
Applicant	[redacted]
Postal Address	
ABN	
Applicant Contact	

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.2.1 Project Overview

The project involves the construction of a new, poultry broiler farm located on land at 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby, approximately 17km northwest of the Tamworth Central Business District (see ***Figure 1***).

The farm will be comprised of sixteen (16) poultry sheds where meat chicken birds (broilers) will be grown for human consumption. Each shed will accommodate a maximum of 60,000 birds giving the farm a total capacity of 960,000 birds. Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 – 10 weeks. As such, there is an average of 5.2 production cycles each year.

The proposed sheds will be constructed in two rows running east west across the site. Each shed will be 176m long, 18.3m wide and will provide an internal floor area of ~3,220m^2. The sheds have a ridge height of ~4.8m and will be constructed with concrete floors, insulated panel walls and Colourbond roofs. The poultry sheds will be fitted with purpose-built infrastructure associated with poultry production including fans, heaters, water and feed lines and lighting.

Other ancillary buildings and supporting infrastructure will include feed storage silos, staff amenities, access roads, power supply, gas storage infrastructure, water pipes and pump, and 2 manager residences.

A site plan showing the location of the proposed farm is included as ***Figure 1*** below. A copy of the development plans is also included as **Appendix A.**

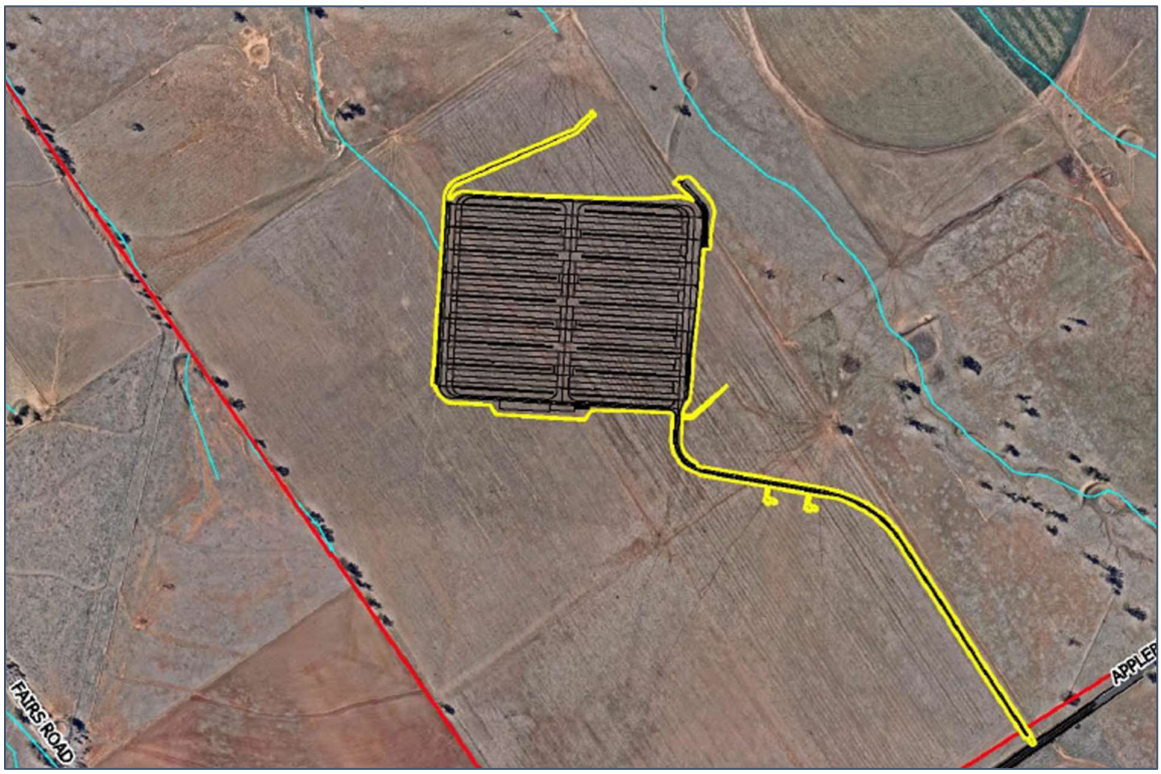

Figure 1: Site Location (Nearmap, 2024)

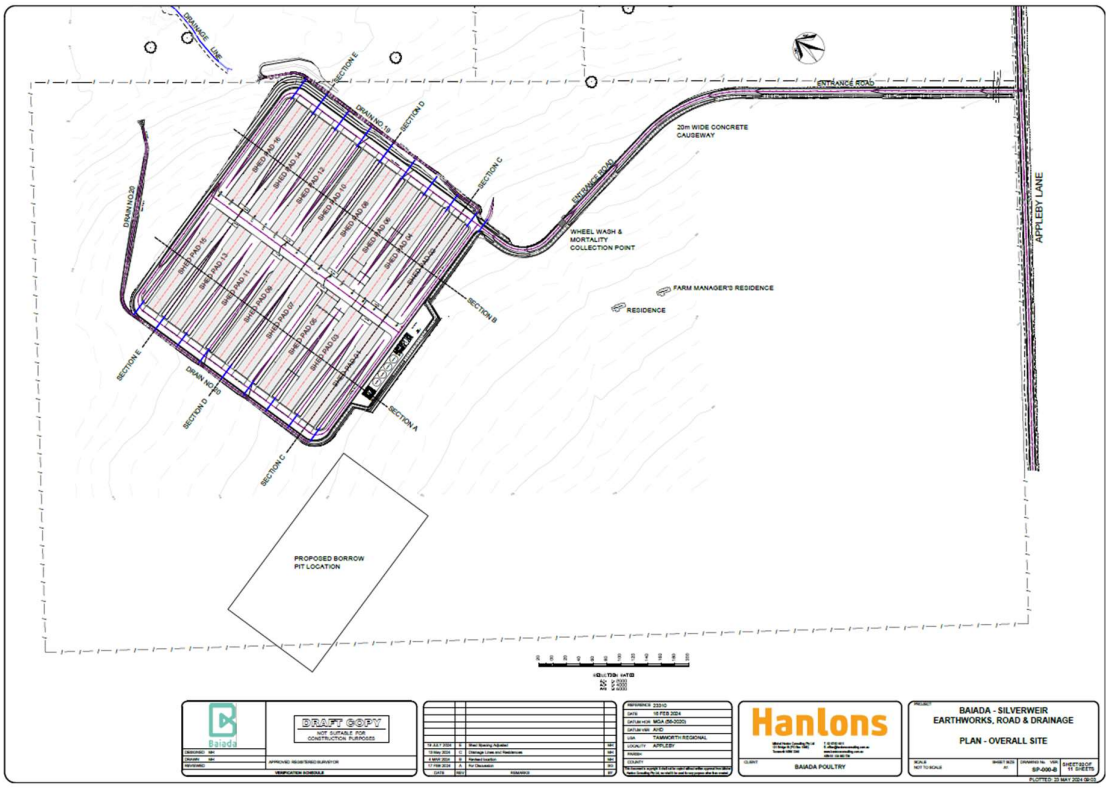

Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan (LGPM, 2024)

1.2.2 Core Objectives

The core objectives of the project are as follows:

- Construction of the Silverweir Poultry Farm consisting of 16 Broiler Sheds with a maximum capacity of 960,000 birds;
- Support expansion of the existing poultry meat cluster within the New England Region; and
- Provide additional meat chickens (broilers) to meet the projected growth in demand for poultry products in Australia.

1.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Baiada's current livestock operations within Tamworth facilitate processing of a maximum of 840,000 birds per week at the existing Out Street Processing facility. Baiada has recently commenced works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth which with the capacity to process up to 3 million birds a week.

To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in all aspects of the poultry cluster will be required. In this regard, around 300 additional poultry sheds will be required, located within a 2-hour drive of the Oakburn processing plant in accordance with animal welfare considerations. The proposed Silverweir Broiler Farm is a direct response to the need to increase broiler supply.

1.4 SITE HISTORY

The subject site was subject to a Major Project Development Consent issued by the Joint Regional Planning Panel in 2010 (DA 0156/2010) which allowed for the establishment of three (3) Poultry Production Units comprised of six (6) sheds each on the site. The 18 sheds had a maximum capacity of 50,000 birds, providing a total of 900,000 birds across the site. The approved site plan is provided as ***Figure 3***. The previous approval was not acted on has subsequently lapsed.

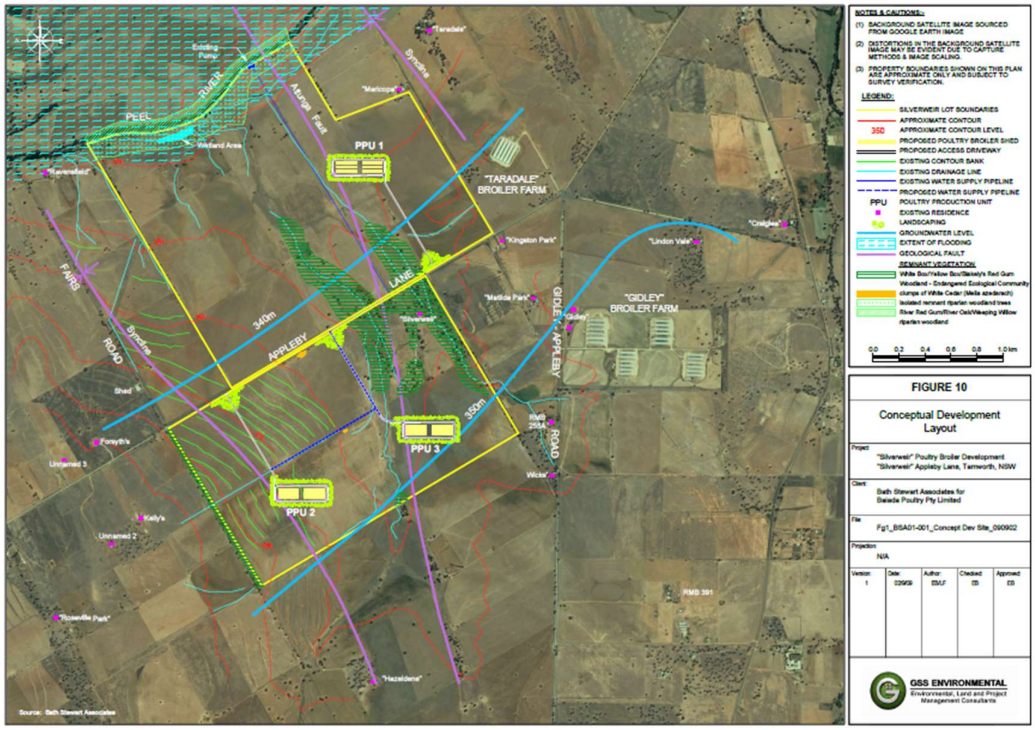

Figure 3: DA 0156/2010 Site Plan

1.5 RESTRICTIONS AND COVENANTS

The site is not subject to any restrictions or covenants. Title Searches for the land subject to this development application are provided in **Appendix B**.

2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 AUSTRALIAN POULTRY INDUSTRY

Research undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) indicates that total chicken meat consumption in Australia has increased by an average of 5% per annum over the 10 years to 2022-23, representing 45% of the total meat consumption. The ABARES commodities report shows that chicken continues to be the most consumed meat in Australia. As shown in ***Figure 4***, consumption of chicken meat per person has increased by over 65% between 2000 (~30kg per person) and 2018 (~50kg per person), driven by the product's versatility, convenience and a lower price point compared to beef, lamb and pork. Per capita poultry consumption is expected to continue growing to reach around 51.5kg by 2022-23. As shown in ***Figure 5***, chicken meat production in Australia has grown steadily with growth forecast to continue.

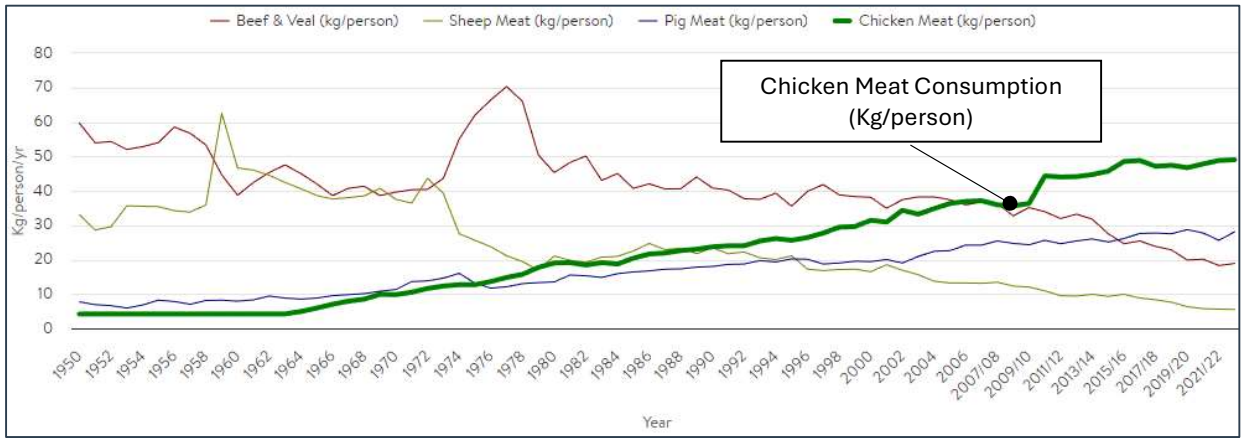

Figure 4: Consumption of Poultry Meat in Australia (ACMF, 2023)

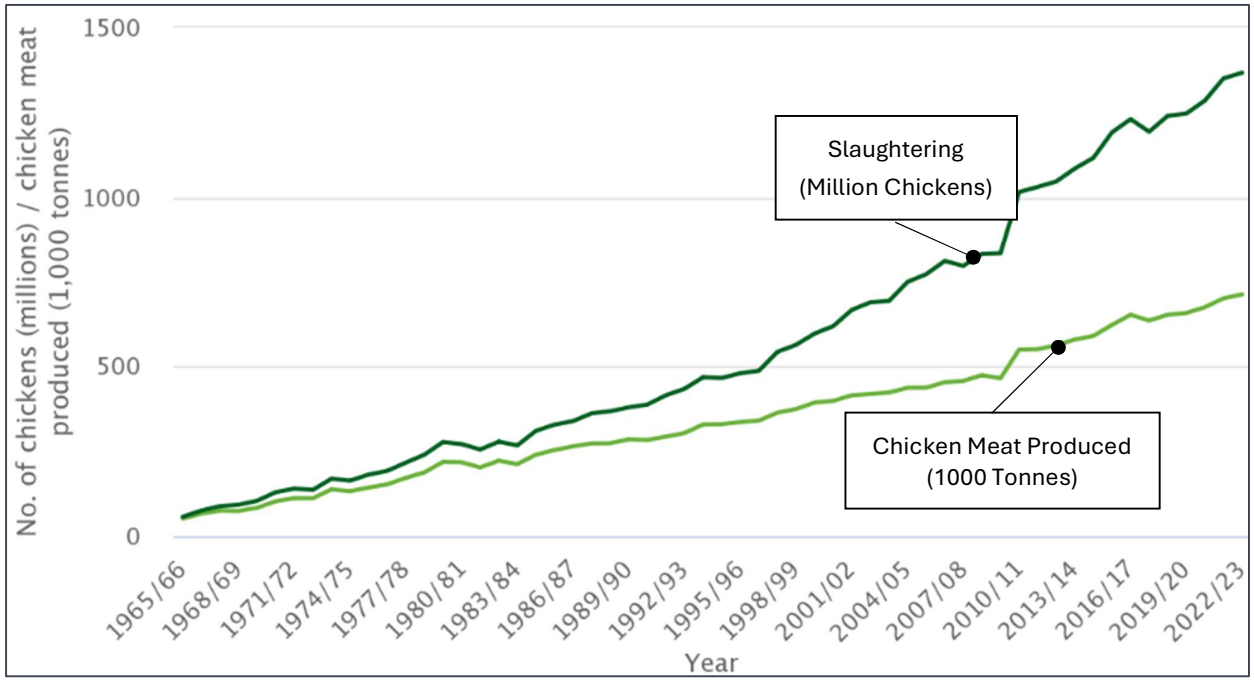

Figure 5: Chicken Meat Produced in Australia (ABARES, 2023)

2.2 NEW ENGLAND POULTRY CLUSTER

In response to the projected demand for poultry products in the Australian marketplace, there is a need to increase production, bird numbers and processing capacity. Without Baiada's contribution to capacity which will be generated by this development, it is highly likely that there will be a significant shortfall in supply of poultry products in the Australian market in the coming years.

Baiada sees the New England Region as being an ideal location for expansion and the increase in production capacity. This is due to the existing accumulation of high value poultry assets and geographic, infrastructure and commercial attributes in the region which have created a poultry meat cluster. Examples of the attributes of this cluster include the following:

- Access to large quantities of locally grown grain including wheat and canola (typically sourced from Tamworth, Moree, Narrabri, Walgett and Gunnedah).
- Proximity to key NSW markets (including Sydney) and South East QLD and direct access to the State road network.
- Ideal land types and topography for the construction of suitable shedding for poultry production.
- An ideal climate in terms of temperature and humidity for poultry production.
- Access to high quality water sources including bore water, dams, rivers and reticulated networks.
- Suitable sites for the location of poultry farms away from sensitive receptors and population centres.
- Support from existing major investment in infrastructure covering all facets of the integrated business.

It is rare to have the combination of the assets and infrastructure and presents a unique opportunity to benefit the New England region, and specifically Tamworth from the future demand for poultry products and facilitate growth of the Baiada business.

To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in all aspects of the poultry cluster will be required. In this regard, around 300 additional poultry sheds will be required, located within a 2-hour drive of the Oakburn processing plant in accordance with animal welfare considerations. The proposed Silverweir Broiler Farm is a direct response to the need to increase broiler supply.

2.3 REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

2.3.1 New England North West Regional Plan 2041

The *New England North West Regional Plan 2041* is a 20 year blueprint for the future for the New England North West Region prepared by the NSW State Government. The vision for the region contained in the plan includes the following statements which align with the core objectives of the proposed development:

- *Healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths.*
- *Communities are well connected, attractive, healthy, safe and prosperous. They are places with a strong sense of community identity, resilience and respect for country. People access a range of employment opportunities, housing choices, vibrant events and festivals and high quality education, health, recreational and other community services.*

Development of the Silverweir Poultry Farm aligns with the vision for the region as it will support significant growth in agriculture, agribusiness and livestock production. The proposed farm will support the forecast expansion of the entire poultry cluster in the region leading to growth in employment and local spending to support the poultry industry.

The Regional Plan also recognises that the food processing sector is rapidly expanding and will drive economic prosperity and jobs growth. The plan has identified five (5) specific parts for the region, which are:

1. Growth, change and opportunity
2. Productive and innovative
3. Sustainable and resilient
4. Housing and place
5. Connected and accessible

The Plan recognisees that agricultural production from the region accounts for around a fifth of NSW's agricultural output and is home to 16% of all farm businesses in the State. The poultry industry (including eggs) contributed $66 million (or 17.1%) of the Region's gross value of agricultural commodities produced

With respect to **Part 2 – Productive and innovative**, it is noted the plan supports the expansion of agribusiness and food processing sectors in Objective 3, with specific reference to the Poultry Industry as follows:

> *"The region accommodates food processing clusters for chicken meat and eggs around Tamworth, intensive glass housing of tomatoes near Guyra, and various cattle feedlot facilities. Chicken meat production and processing is the largest intensive agribusiness regional employer and is centred around the Baiada processing plant in Tamworth. Livestock production is one of the fastest growing and emerging industries in the region, with strong growth forecast due to growing demand from domestic and export consumers. These food processing industries may also generate opportunities for further organics processing facilities to manage agricultural by-products and waste. Such facilities will require careful consideration of potential land use conflicts with existing and future uses."*

Consistent with Part 2, the proposed development will support significant growth of the livestock and food processing sectors as well as the larger supply including agriculture (grain demand), livestock farming and supporting contractors. The Poultry Farm will provide the support and impetus for significant expansion of the entire poultry cluster in the region leading to growth in employment and local spending to support the industry. Secondary businesses within the supply chain, particularly those associated with the transport and logistics as well as grain production will also benefit from the broader expansion of poultry cluster.

With respect to Parts 1, 3 -5, the proposed development is consistent with these parts as:

- **Part 1 – Growth, change and opportunity:** The proposed development will significantly increase direct and indirect employment within the Tamworth region, and facilitate expansion and investment of in the broader poultry cluster. The Poultry Farm will be an efficient and modern facility that adopts best practice equipment and methodologies, reinforcing the areas reputation as a high-quality poultry production hub. The proposed development is not expected to have significant negative impacts on the future growth, community need or reginal economic development.
- **Part 3 – Sustainable and Resilient:** The development has been subject to a rigorous assessment of potential environmental impacts and will be constructed and operated in a manner consistent with the applicable environmental standards.
- **Part 4 – Housing and place:** The proposed Silverweir Poultry Farm will support economic activity in the area providing employment and intern supporting the local community. The development will support the local character of being a key agricultural producer.
- **Part 5 – Connected and accessible:** The proposed development can be efficiently connected to all necessary infrastructure networks that are necessary to service a modern poultry farm. Where necessary, new connections to the infrastructure networks are to be provided in accordance with the relevant standards. The site is well located to take advantage of major transport networks which enable transport of products from the region to major national markets. As shown in ***Figure 6***, the major roads in and around Tamworth (including the Oxley Highway) are identified as part of the Agricultural Freight network, with the movement of poultry specifically identified as a key agricultural commodity.

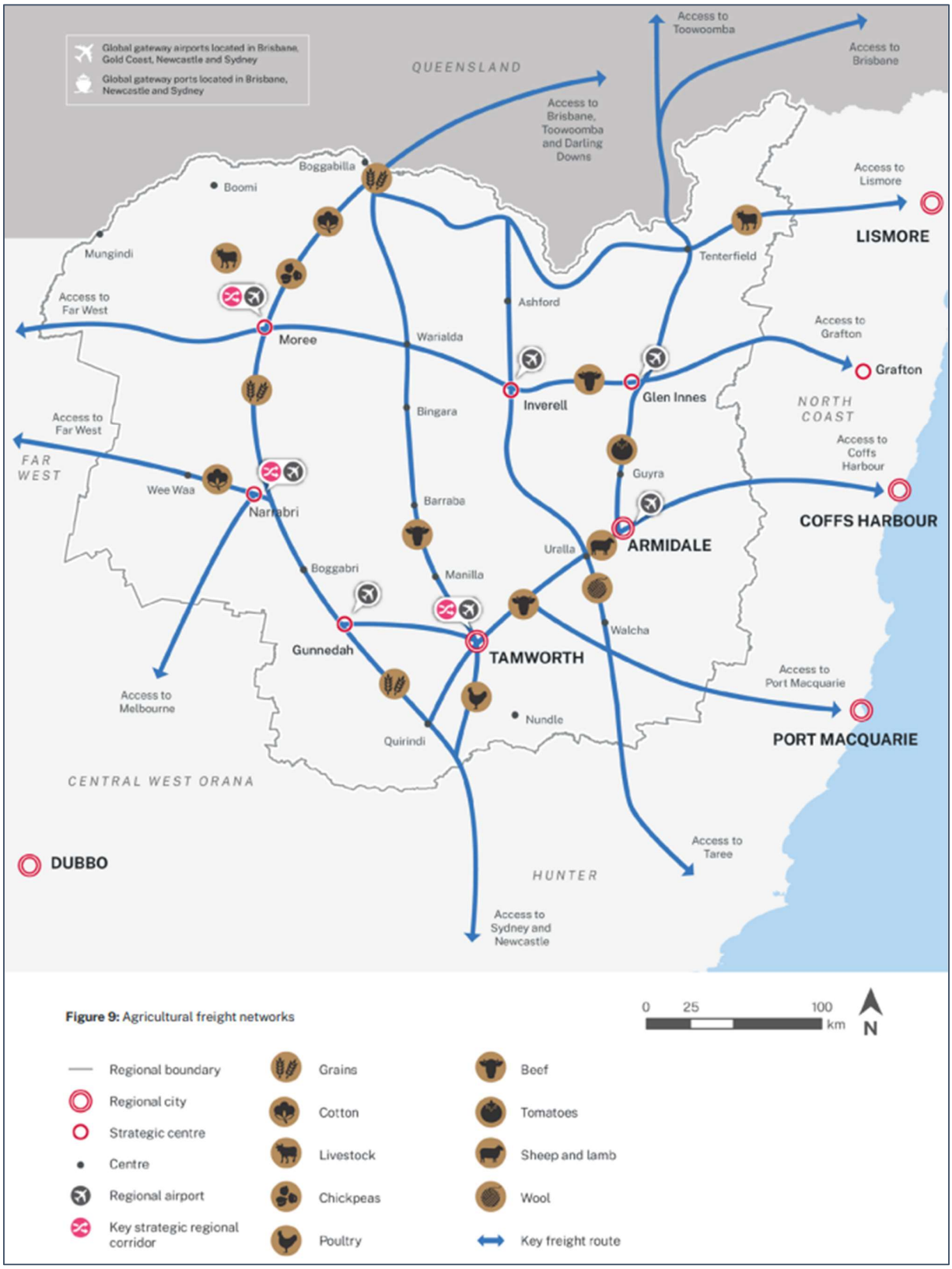

Figure 9: Agricultural freight networks

Figure 6: Agricultural Freight Network (Department of Planning and Environment, 2022)

2.3.2 Local Planning Context

As outlined above, the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010 (LEP)* identifies the site within the RU1 Primary Production zone. The proposed development is defined as intensive livestock agriculture and is permitted with consent within the RU1 Zone. The objectives of the zone are:

- *To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.*
- *To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.*
- *To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*
- *To permit subdivision only where it is considered by the Council to be necessary to maintain or increase agricultural production.*
- *To restrict the establishment of inappropriate traffic generating uses along main road frontages.*
- *To ensure sound management of land which has an extractive or mining industry potential and to ensure that development does not adversely affect the extractive industry.*
- *To permit development for purposes where it can be demonstrated that suitable land or premises are not available elsewhere.*

The proposed development is defined as an **intensive livestock agriculture** and is **permitted with consent** within the RU1 Primary Production Zone. The proposed poultry farm is a rural use located within the Primary Production zone and surrounded by a number of other rural properties, including broiler farms, grazing and extensive agriculture. The proposed development will also provide employment for an additional 6 full time employment positions and support the broader growth and expansion of the New England Poultry Cluster.

As demonstrated in this EIS, the proposed development has been subject to a rigorous environmental assessment which confirms the project can be undertaken in a manner which minimise potential conflict with adjoining zones and sensitive receptors. As such, it is considered that the proposed development closely aligns with the RU1 Zone objectives.

In 2020, Council released the ***Tamworth Regional Blueprint 100*** as an overarching strategy that provides a roadmap to take the Tamworth Region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and high living standards with a population of 100,000 people. Priority 3.4 acknowledges that Tamworth is the centre for the production and processing of beef, lamb and poultry products for supply to the whole of New South Wales and that the presence of existing grain, livestock, feedlots, sale yards and processing facilities provides a competitive advantage to producers in the sector. It is also identified that the meat and food processing sector has significant potential to expand its meat processing capacity and increase its expertise in providing high-tech agribusiness solutions. The proposed development directly responds to the forecast increase in poultry production with the region.

As demonstrated above, the proposed development closely aligns with the historic, current, future planning intents for specified for Tamworth.

2.4 SITE CONTEXT

2.4.1 The Site

Table 2: Site Details

ADDRESS	Silverweir, 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby NSW 2340
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	17/-/DP95993, 18/-/DP95993, 19/-/DP95993, 161/-/DP560748
LAND OWNER	Rostry Pty Limited
TOTAL SITE AREA	429.67 ha

The proposal relates to land at 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby NSW 2340 which is commonly known as "Silverweir". The property consists of 7 titles to the North and South of Appleby Lane, and has a total area of 429.67ha. As shown ***Figure 7***, the site has been historically cleared and used for cropping and grazing activities. It is important to note that the proposed farm is located on the North side of Appleby Lane only. While the Applicant's landholdings also include 3 properties to the south of Appleby Lane, no changes are proposed or required in relation to this land, which does not form part of this Application. A copy of a current Certificate of Titles is included in **Appendix B**.

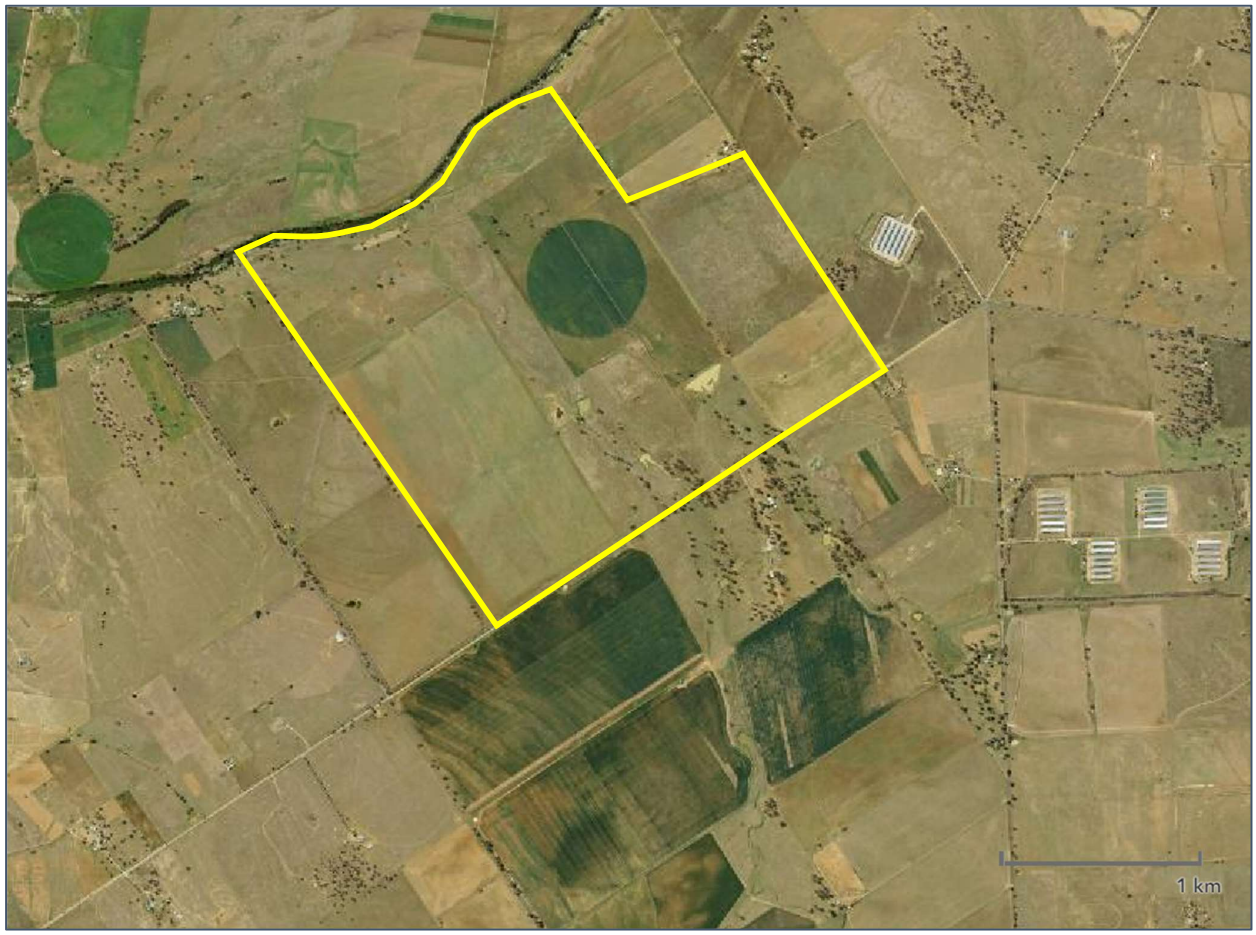

Figure 7: Site Location (E-Spatial NSW, 2024)

2.4.2 The Surrounding Area

The subject site is located approximately 17km north west of the Tamworth CBD. In addition, to extensive agriculture and grazing activities, land uses which surround the site include the following:

- The Taradale Broiler Farm (225,000 Birds) to the east.
- The Gidley Broiler Farm (567,900 Birds) to the east.
- The Tangaratta Poultry Feed Mill 9km to the south on Wallamore Road.
- The Oakburn Integrated Poultry Processing Plant (SSD-9394) 11.5km on the Oxley highway.

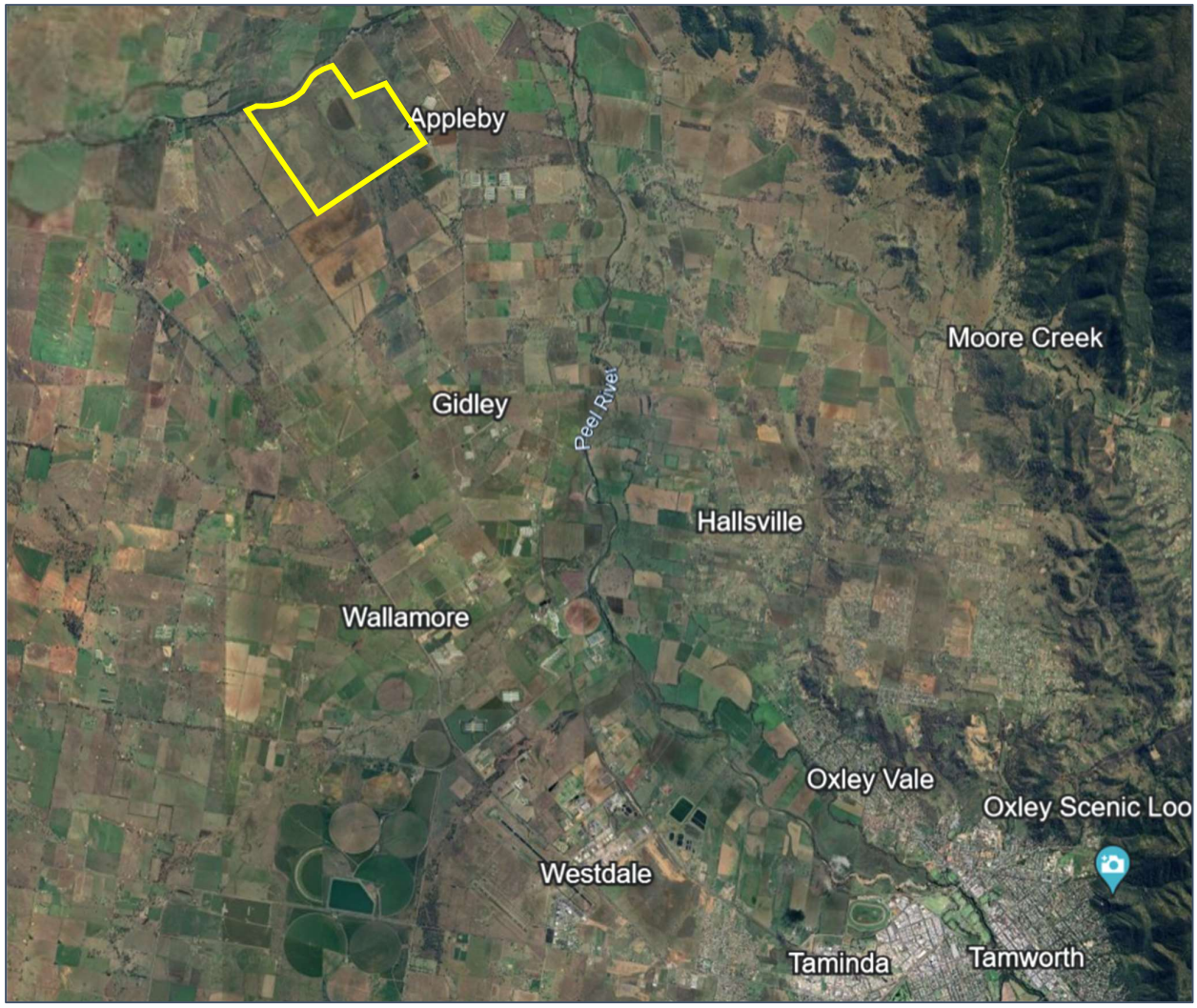

Figure 8: Site Context (Nearmap, 2023)

As shown in ***Figure 9***, there are 20 sensitive receptors (residential dwellings on rural properties) within 3 km of the poultry farm, with the closest being located approximately:

- 1.2 km to the west.
- 1.5 km to the south west.
- 1.7 km to the north east.
- 1.9 km to the east.

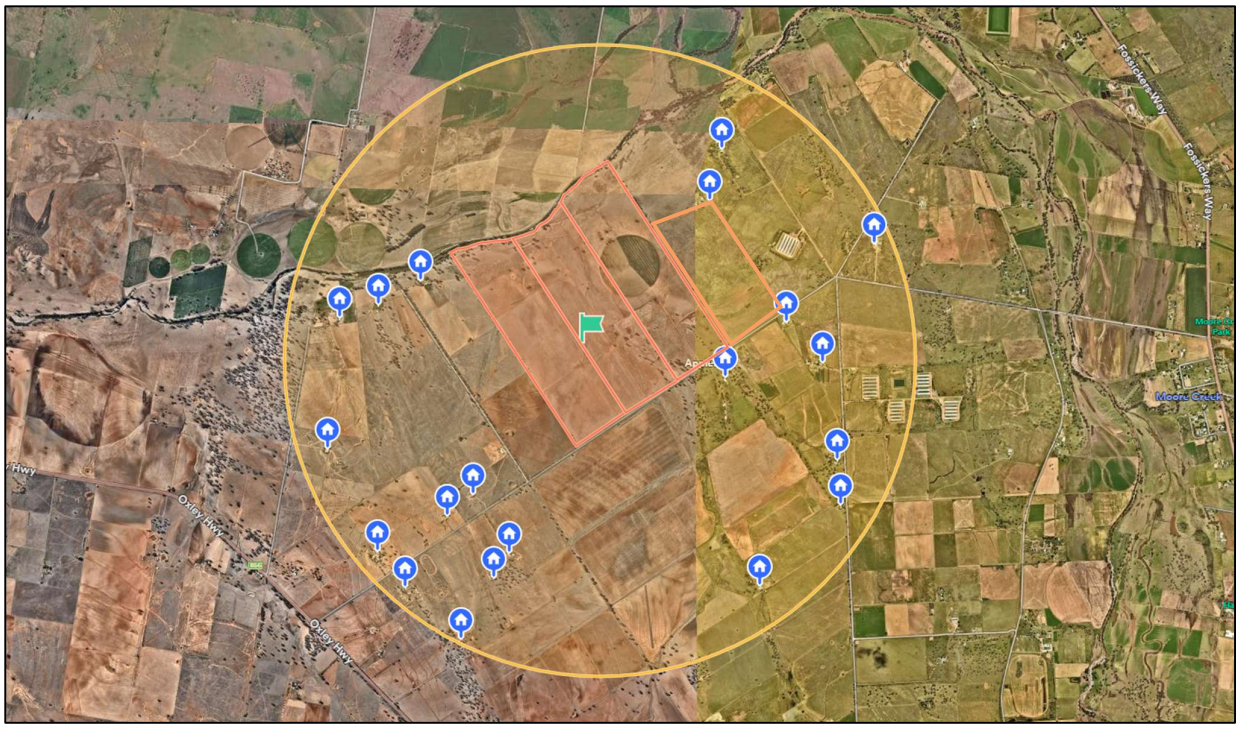

Figure 9: Sensitive Receptors within 3km of the Site (Nearmap, 2023)

2.5 IMPORTANT NATURAL OR BUILT FEATURES

2.5.1 Topography

The site is located on the slopes of the Peel River flood plain. The local topography is characterised by moderately undulating hills with open agricultural land, falling to the narrow alluvial floodplains of the Peel River. The terrain of the site and the immediate surrounding area is generally characterised as flat, with a gentle fall of approximately 20m from the southern to northern boundary (over ~2km) equating to a 1% slope. A Site Survey is included as **Appendix C**.

2.5.2 Geology and Soils

According to the Soil Landscapes of the Tamworth 1:100,000 Sheet (DCCEEW, 2024) the subject land is located within the Glenmore (gm) Soil Landscape. Soil types are dominated by very deep, imperfectly drained Black Vertosols (Black Earths) with some very deep, imperfectly drained Red and Brown Vertosols (Red and Brown Clays) and minor occurrences of moderately deep, moderately well-drained Red Chromosols where underlying sedimentary bedrock outcrops.

2.5.3 Flooding and Drainage

The site generally falls from the southern boundary being Appleby Lane to the north towards the Peel River. The site is not mapped as flood prone and within the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010* and is outside of the area assessed in the Tamworth City Wide Flood Investigation 2019.

As shown in ***Figure 10*** the site includes an unnamed watercourse to the east of the proposed poultry farm. This watercourse that is mapped on the State's Hydroline Spatial Data and runs south to north, ultimately discharging into the Peel River. The proposed development is setback a minimum of 40m from the watercourse and as such does not involve waterfront land.

The mapping also picks up some minor overland flow paths within the existing cultivation areas to the north of farm. These flow paths are not natural channels or natural channels that has been artificially improved, do not include beds and banks and as such is not considered to conform with the definition of river for the purposes of the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Figure 10: Hydro line mapping (NSW Government, 2024)

2.5.4 Ecology

Historically the site has been predominantly cleared and use for extensive agricultural activities including cropping and grazing. The new poultry farm has an impact area of 17.56 ha and is entirely located within the cleared areas of the site. The onsite vegetation within the impact area includes 17.34 Ha of cropping land, and 0.22Ha of Grassland. The property also contains an area grey box grassy woodland, which will be retained on site and is not impacted by the proposed development.

2.5.5 Ground Water

A groundwater assessment undertaken for the site in 2009, identified Devonian bedrock underlying the site comprises a regional, fractured rock aquifer. The rock mass has a low permeability and groundwater flow is predominantly via fractures. There is likely to be some groundwater discharge from the fractured rock aquifers as either springs or seepage into the alluvial sediments low in the catchment towards the Peel River.

The alluvial deposits comprise a shallow unconfined aquifer, perched on the underlying fractured rock. Groundwater flow is intergranular, rather than via fractures, and permeability is likely to be high. From the bore records, yields as high as 50 litres per second (l/s) were noted. Groundwater in the alluvium will generally be in continuity with the Peel River.

Based on records from bores within 2km of the site, the water bearing zone (where groundwater is encountered) in the fractured rock occurs at depths of between 9.8 and 76.8 metres below ground level. Yields are low to moderate, ranging from 0.04 to 1.9 litres per second. The water bearing zone in the alluvial gravels (close to the Peel River) occurs at depths of 13.0 to 18.6 metres below ground level. Recorded bore yields are moderate to high, ranging from 1 to 2.5 litres per second.

Groundwater flow in the fractured rock aquifer is expected to reflect the topography, with flow to the north or north-west towards the Peel River and down the river valley. Groundwater flow in the alluvial deposits is also expected to be towards the Peel River, with a down valley component. Recorded groundwater levels (corrected for topographic elevation), as indicated 328 and 358 m AHD, greater than 10m below the surface.

A search of the BoM's *National Atlas of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems indicates* that there are no groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) reliant on surface expression of groundwater (rivers, springs, wetlands) within the impact areas of the development site.

2.5.6 Heritage

There are no items of local or state heritage significance identified on the land where the farm is to be constructed. The Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2014 identifies that Lots 1 and 2, DP 162586 on southern side of Appleby Lane contains and an historic house "Silverweir" within is identified as having Local heritage Significance. The land on the southern side of Appleby Lane, while owned by the Applicant, is not included as part of this development application and the house is located approximately 1.3km away from the proposed poultry farm. Accordingly, the proposed development will not result in any unacceptable impacts on the local heritage values associated with the dwelling.

2.5.7 Bushfire

The site is located on land that is mapped by the RFS as bush fire prone land. Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019 (PBP) applies to all development applications on bush fire prone land. As required by Section 1.4 of the PBP, Firebird ecoSultants Pty Ltd has been engaged to prepare a Bush Fire Assessment Report (BFAR) to address the requirements that are applicable to the proposed development. A Copy of this report in Included as **Appendix J**.

2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

2.6.1 Water Supply

The site is currently supplied with water from the Peel Regulated Water Source and has an existing Water Access Licence for 35 units on high security (90AL813391) and another for 423 units on general security (90AL813392). The Water Sharing Plan for the Peel River is currently allowing 100% of the allocation to be used for both high security and general security licenses.

Water is currently sourced via a 200 millimetre (mm) axial flow pump (90CA813393) located adjacent to the Peel River and contained within Lot 17 in DP 95993. Pipelines connecting this pump to the irrigation infrastructure on site are currently in use and will be extended and upgraded to service the farm.

2.6.2 Electricity Supply

Essential Energy's network is currently connected to the water extraction pump located on the site and will be extended to service the broiler farm.

2.6.3 Telecommunications

Mobile and land line networks are available in the local area and suitable agreements will be made with the service provider for access.

2.6.4 Road Network and Site Access

Vehicular Access to the site is currently achieved via Appleby Lane. Appleby Lane has a single travel lane in each direction and sealed shoulders and has ability to connect to the Oxley Highway. As shown in ***Figure 11***, Appleby Lane is identified by the National Highway Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) as an approved B-Double Route providing for 25/26m B-Doubles without conditions. The site is ideally located with respect to existing heavy vehicle networks that service the New England poultry cluster including:

- Placement of day-old chicks from the Country Road Hatchery located approximately 15km to the south and accessible via the Oxley Highway;
- Provision of poultry feed from Tangaratta Stockfeeds located approximately 9km to the south and accessible via the Oxley Highway; and
- Transport of grown broilers to the new Oakburn Processing Plant located approximately 11km south of the site accessible via the Oxley Highway.

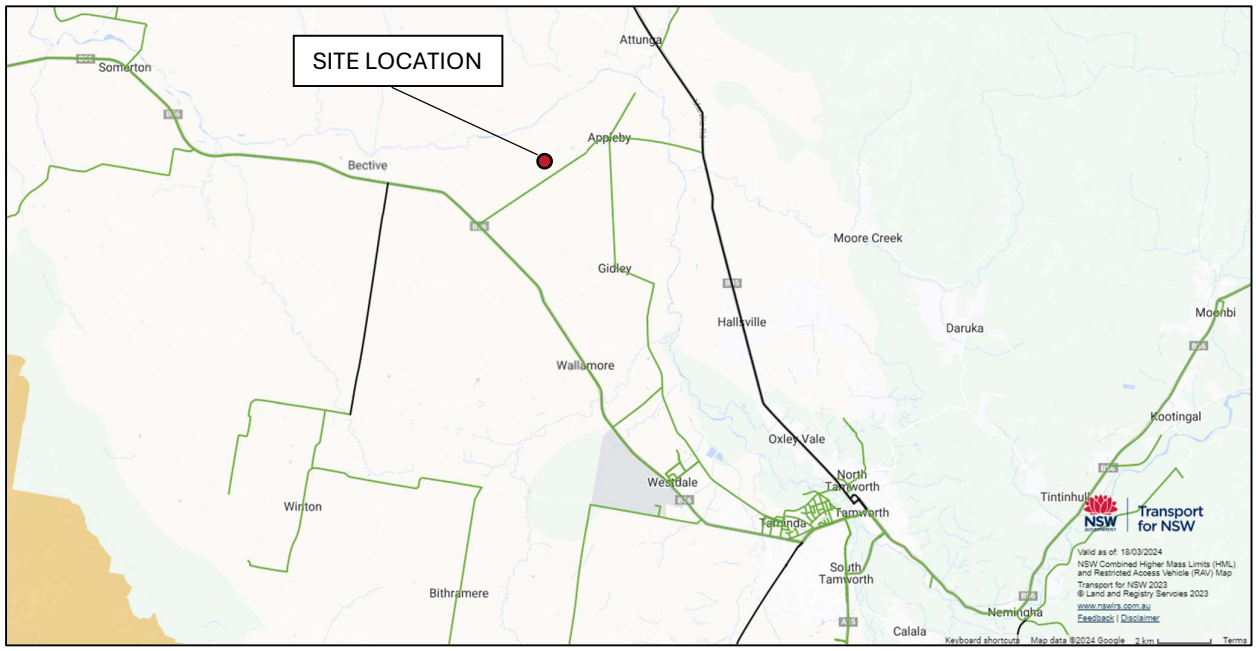

Figure 11: Approved B-Double Routes (TfNSW, 2024)

2.7 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Research undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) indicates that total chicken meat consumption in Australia has increased by an average of 5% per annum over the 10 years to 2022-23, representing 45% of the total meat consumption. This historical trend and projected increase in the consumption of chicken meat is projected to continue to in Australia well beyond 2020.

In order to meet the projected demand, Baiada has recently commenced works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth which with the capacity to process up to 3 million birds a week. To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in all aspects of the poultry cluster will be required. In this regard, it is expected that around 300 additional poultry sheds within a 2-hour drive of the plant will be required. The proposed Silverweir Broiler Farm is a direct response to the need to increase broiler supply in the region.

The alternatives to carrying out the development include:

1. Do nothing;
2. Expanding operations on the existing Baiada Farms; and
3. Construction of a poultry farm in an alternate location within the region.

These alternatives are discussed in Table 3.

Table 3: Alternatives to the Project

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE	DISCUSSION
DO NOTHING	As demonstrated in this EIS, the site specially and the New England Region more broadly provides a combination of critical factors which make it an ideal location for construction of a new poultry farm. The primary factor driving the development or a broiler farm in this location is the close proximity of the Oakburn Processing Plant,

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE	DISCUSSION
	Tangaratta Feed mill, and Country Road Hatchery which make broiler farming on the site very efficient through significant reductions in the transportation lengths. This has significant benefits with respect to reducing transport costs, reducing greenhouse emissions, and improving animal welfare. In addition, the site has an existing water source suitable for poultry production, readily available power supply, B-Double access, minimal constraints (e.g. flooding, heritage, ecological significance, slope, bushfire), and appropriate buffers to sensitive receptors, that would restrict the development of a broiler farm. As outlined above, to support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, and additional 300 additional poultry sheds within a 2-hour drive of the Oakburn processing plant are required. As such, doing nothing in terms of expanding poultry production is the region is not an option. With respect to this particular site, the consequence of doing nothing would require an additional 16 sheds being constructed on an alternate property, which does not have the inherent characteristic which make this site ideal.
EXPAND EXISTING BROILER FARMS	Expansion of other Baiada Farms would mean increasing the number of sheds and birds located at those farms. In response to the proposed growth in production in the region, most existing broiler farms are already investigating opportunities for the construction of additional sheds to increase supply. While expansion of existing farms provides some opportunities for small increases in broiler supply, the additional 300 sheds required to support the Oakburn Processing Plant cannot be achieved at existing broiler farms and more greenfield sites are required.
BUILD THE FARM ON AN ALTERNATE SITE	Construction of the farm on an alternate site within the region would require the identification and purchase of an alternate site as well as gaining all necessary approvals for development. It is difficult to identify an available, alternate site which has the same contribution of factors which make the Silverweir Poultry Farm viable and suitable for the development, including: • A location within 2 hours of the Oakburn Processing Plant in accordance with Animal Welfare requirements (Silverweir is ~15 mins from Oakburn). • Access to existing B-Double Routes with efficient connections to the Oakburn Processing Plant, Tangaratta Feed mill, and Country Road Hatchery. • Provision of an appropriate and reliable water source suitable for poultry production. • Access to all necessary infrastructure networks including power, telecommunications, gas providers and roads. • Minimal environmental, cultural and or physical constraints which would preclude delivery of farm of this size. • Appropriate zoning and planning provisions within the applicable LEP, DCP and SEPPs to support a development application. • Adequate separation from sensitive receptors to avoid amenity impacts including noise and air emissions. • Available for purchase at a price which does not make the project financially unviable. While alternate sites may be identified, as demonstrated in this EIS, the proposed Silverweir Poultry Farm can be delivered in an extremely efficient manner with minimal negative environmental, social or economic impact. As such, it is considered that this specific site is one of the best locations in the region. Moreover, where appropriate,

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE	DISCUSSION
	alternate sites are identified, these are most likely also being pursued by other growers in the region to supply the Oakburn Processing Plant.

The alternatives to the proposed development do not represent an equally efficient approach to the expansion of broiler farming in the region to meet the forecast growth in demand and supply the approved Oakburn Processing Plant. In addition, due to the increase in broiler production required within the region, the alternatives identified above are already being explored by other growers and will all play a part in growth of the New England poultry cluster.

Further, as demonstrated within the EIS, the proposed development can be undertaken in a manner consistent with applicable environmental and planning safe-guards and standards and as such, the project is clearly the best option to achieve the core objectives.

3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project involves the construction of a new, state of the art, poultry farm with the capacity to accommodate up to 960,000 birds on land at 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby. The farm will be comprised of sixteen (16) poultry sheds where meat chicken birds (broilers) will be grown for human consumption with each shed accommodating a maximum of 60,000 birds. Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 – 10 weeks. As such, there is an average of 5.2 production cycles each year. The key project details are summarised in **Table 5** below.

Table 4: Project Details

ASPECT	DETAILS
Site Description	Lots 17, 18 and 19 on DP95993, Lot 161 on DP560748
Site Area	429.67 ha
Impact Footprint	~ 17 Ha
Staff Numbers	6 FTE
Proposed Access	BAL/BAR connecting to Appleby Lane
On Site Car Parking	10 parking spaces
Hours of operations	24 hours a day / 7 days a week

3.2 DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.2.1 Project Area

The proposal relates to land at 448 Appleby Lane, Appleby. The site is formally described as Lot 17, 18 & 19 on DP95993 and Lot 161 on DP560748 and has a combined area of 429.67 ha. The proposed poultry farm has an impact area of approximately 17ha located in the centre of the site. The site forms part of the larger Silverweir land holding owned by the Applicant. It is important to note that all works associated with this development application are located on the northern side of Appleby Lane and wholly contained within Lots 17 - 19.

Historically, the subject land (impact area) has been cleared as a result of the past agricultural activities including cropping and grazing. Historic aerial photos from 1961 shows the site is a similar state to the current and the impact are devoid of native trees. On site vegetation surveys determined that the impact area includes the following vegetation assemblages:

- Cropping land (17.34ha)
- Disturbed Grassland (0.22ha)

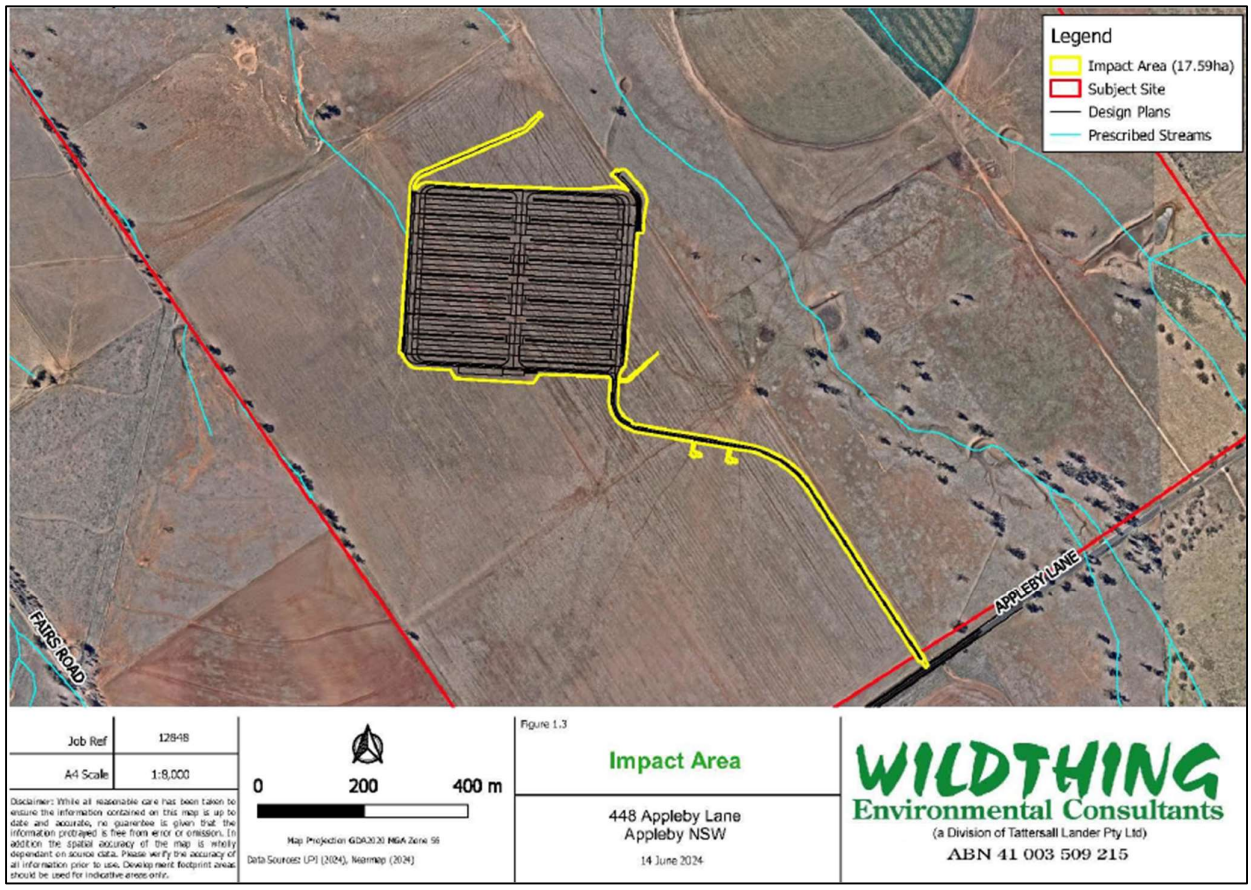

Figure 12: Project Area (Wildthing, 2024)

3.3 PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN

3.3.1 Farm Design

The proposed development will be a modern, best practice and purpose-built poultry farm which will accommodate up to 960,000 birds at any one time. The farm is located centrally on the site, with the facility itself occupying and area of approximately 17ha. A Layout Plan of the farm is provided in ***Figure 13*** Development Plans are included in **Appendix A.** Specifically, the new poultry farm will incorporate the following built components:

- Construction of 16 poultry sheds in two rows of 8 sheds.
- Sheds will be 176m long, 18.3m wide with an internal floor area of ~3,220m^2
- 24 Silos holding for holding of poultry feed.
- 30,000L LPG Gas Tank.
- Administration and staff amenities building.
- On site driveways, parking and manoeuvring areas and wheel wash.
- A new driveway crossover, connecting to Appleby Lane.
- Security Gate. wheel wash and mortality cold storage container.
- Stormwater swales.
- Landscape Buffers.

- 2 x Manager's Residences with garages.
- Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (Septic) for managers residences and staff amenities.
- 2 x Diesel Generators for back-up power supply.
- Borrow Pit.

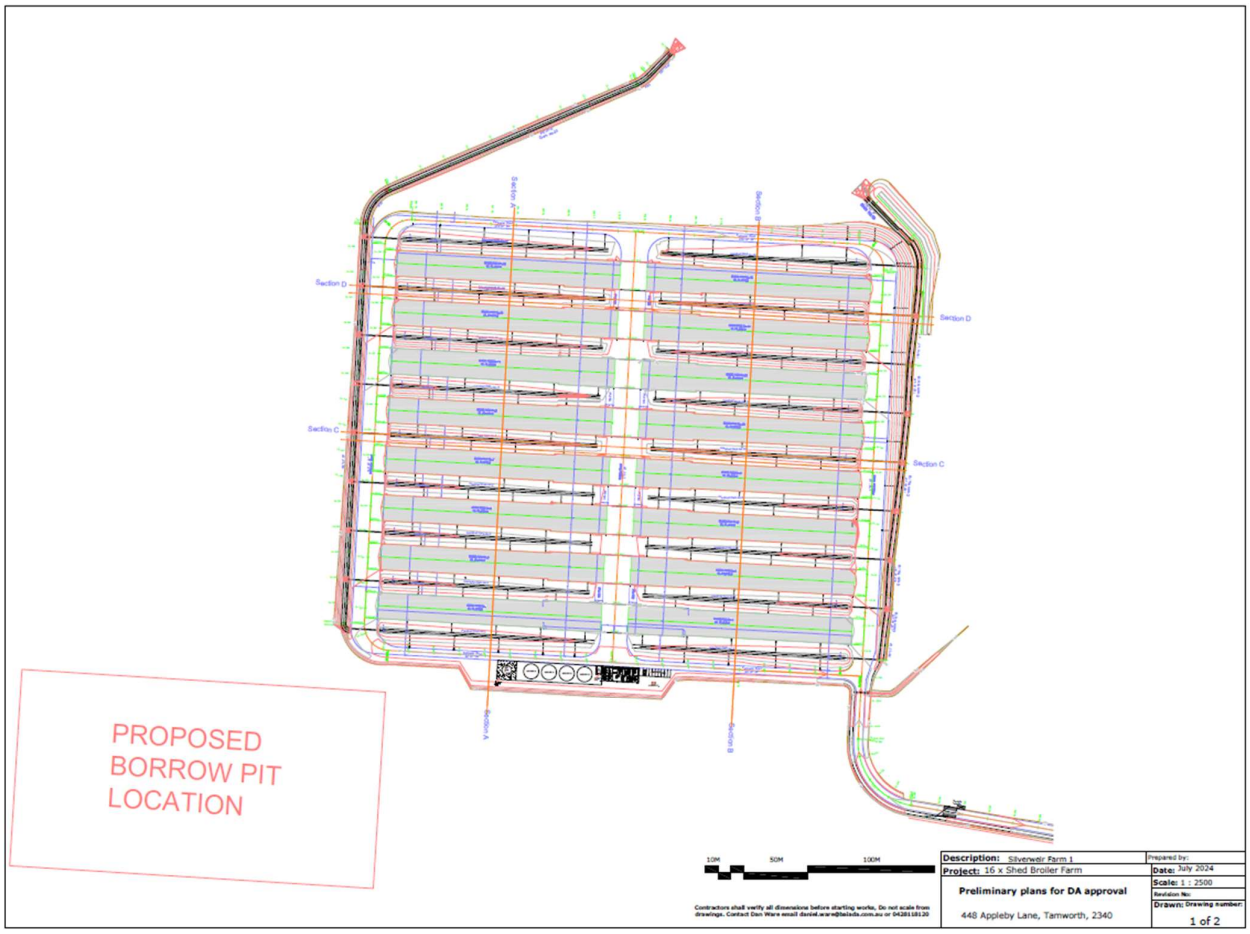

Figure 13: Proposed Site Plan

The proposed sheds will be constructed in two rows running east west across the site. Each shed will be 176m long, 18.3m wide and will provide an internal floor area of ~3,220m^2. The sheds have a ridge height of ~4.8m and will be constructed with concrete floors, insulated panel walls and colourbond roofs. The poultry sheds will be fitted with purpose-built infrastructure associated with poultry production including fans, heaters, water and feed lines and lighting.

The proposed sheds will be constructed with concrete floors, insulated panel walls and Colourbond roofs. The poultry sheds will be fitted with purpose-built infrastructure associated with poultry production including fans, heaters, water and feed lines and lighting.

The shed colours are chosen in response consideration of thermal performance of materials and visual impacts. In this regard, lighter colours have best thermal performance in terms of absorbing less heat and minimising the need for additional cooling during summer months. In addition, the use of lighter colours with the New England Region is generally more consistent with the colours of the surrounding landscape, compared to darker colours that stand out during the dryer months. Accordingly, the proposed sheds and ancillary building are to be constructed with surfmist colourbond roofs and walls.

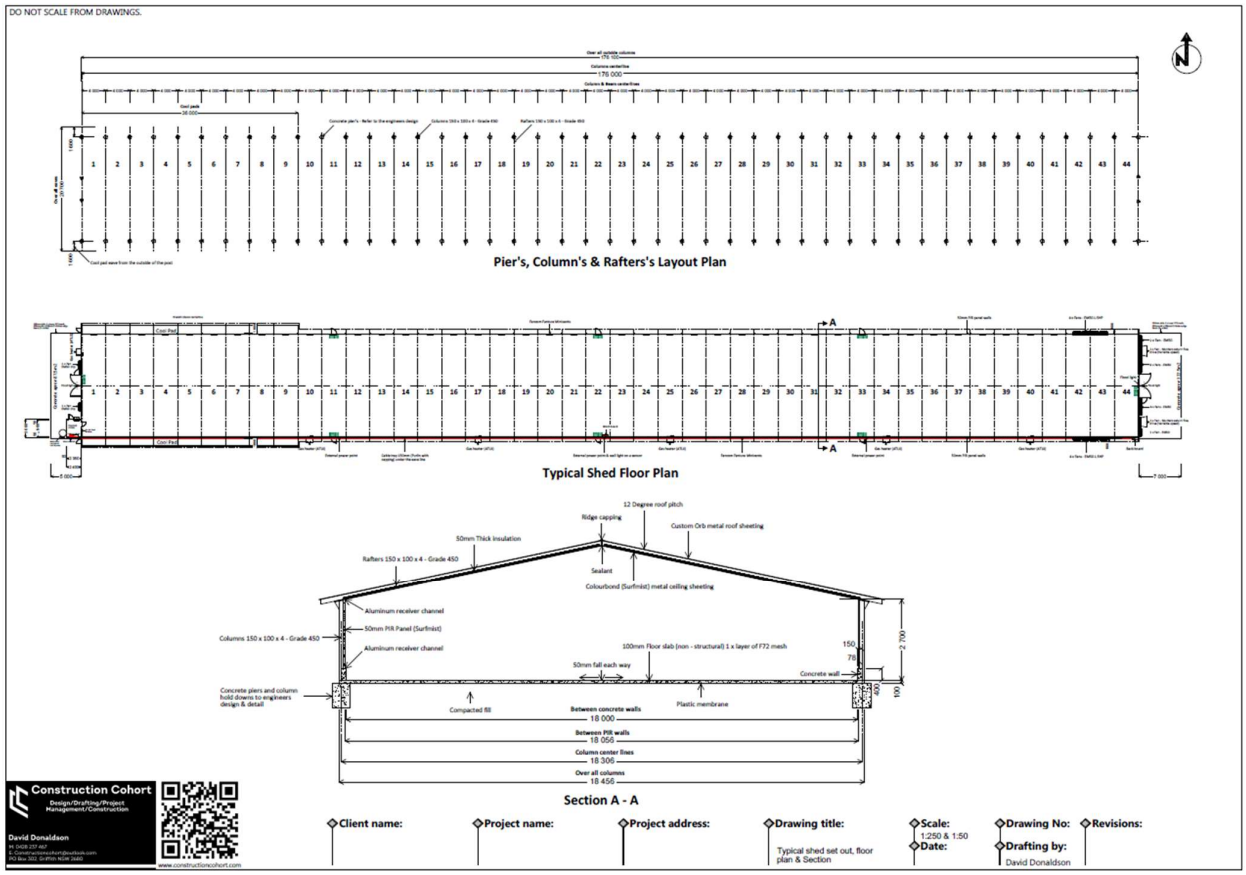

Figure 14: Proposed Shed Plans

Driveways, and truck manoeuvring areas on site will be constructed with a gravel running surface.

3.3.2 Ancillary Buildings

3.3.2.1 Staff Amenities Building

A staff amenities building including with a floor area of approximately 293m^2 (10.4 x 28.1m) will be constructed at the southern end of the farm. The staff amenities building will provide the employees with lockers, amenities, lunchrooms and office spaces to assist with day to day operation of the farm. The building will also provide storage spaces for farm equipment (e.g. tractor and slasher) and a lockable chemical storage area. The building will also provide a space for the backup diesel generators which are used in the event of a power failure at the site.

The proposed amenities building will be constructed with concrete floors, insulated panel walls and a Colourbond roof. Wastewater from the staff amenities will be treated by a standard on-site septic system, which will be installed subject to a separate s68 Application and can be conditioned accordingly.

3.3.2.2 Feed Silos

Three steel feed silos, each with a storage capacity of 65m3 (42T)., will be installed between every two sheds on the farm. Feed will be transferred from the feed trucks into these silos for distribution via feed lines into the sheds. Each silo will have a diameter of approximately 4.4 m and will stand approximately 9m high.

3.3.2.3 Wheel Wash

The potential for transmission of disease pathogens via vehicles entering and exiting the site will be reduced through the installation and use of a wheel wash facility on the access road near the entrance to the farm. All vehicles entering the farm will be required to pass through the wheel wash to remove dust particles from the wheels and chassis. The relatively small water volume requirement for the wheel wash will be provided from the water storage tanks at the farm.

An appropriate chemical sanitiser (for example, Microgard 755N or Micro-4, which are commonly used on poultry farms) will be added to the wash water and sensors will trigger automatic operation as a vehicle drives over the facility. Wash down water will be captured in a tank below the wheel wash in a tank and will be allowed to evaporate or can be pumped out and disposed of via a licensed contractor if required.

3.3.2.4 Dead Bird Collection Freezer

Over the course of a production cycle, up to 5% of the flock may be lost as mortalities. The sheds will be checked by the on-site manger daily and any deceased birds will be promptly removed from the sheds and transferred to a cold storage container located at the farm entrance point. Dead birds will not be stockpiled within the development site for reasons of strict quarantine control and to protect the remainder of the flock from potential sources of infection/disease.

Every 1-2 days a rigid truck will collect the mortalities from the farm and transport them for rendering at the Oakburn Rendering Plant. The location of the freezer enables the mortalities to be collected and transported off site without the trucks going any near the livestock as a biosecurity measure.

3.3.3 Managers Residences

In order to provided 24/7 oversight to farm operations and enable an immediate response to any operational or animal welfare issues, the farm will be overseen by 2 full time managers who will reside on the site. The proposed managers residences are located on the new farm access road, between Appleby Lane and the proposed farm.

As shown in ***Figure 15***, the proposed managers residences are high quality, brick homes with 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a double lock up garage. Water supply to the dwellings will be provided via rainwater tanks (45,000L), which can be topped up by tanker if required. Wastewater from the managers residences will be treated by a standard on-site septic system, which will be installed subject to a separate s68 Application and can be conditioned accordingly.

Figure 15: Proposed Manager's Dwellings (Single Builders, 2024)

3.3.4 Earthworks

The civil design for the proposed broiler farm has sought to minimise earthworks through aligning the proposed sheds with the slope of the land, adoption a stepped approach to shed floor levels (i.e. shed are progressively stepped down the land, and balancing cut and fill. Adoption of this approach (rather than a single level farm) has minimised the amount of cut and fill across the site to ~2m of Cut and ~2m of fill, excluding the perimeter road and stormwater swales). The Civil Engineering Plans showing the proposed earthworks included in **Appendix A**. A potential borrow pit has been identified on the site to allow for site won material to be utilised in construction should additional or alternate fill material be required.

3.3.5 Landscaping Buffers

The proposed development includes screen planning in a 3-line configuration supporting a mix of shrubs and trees. Where practical, the vegetation is to include a mix of locally native plants which will support the local fauna and ecosystems. As shown in ***Figure 16***, screen planting is proposed around the farm to soften potential views of the farm from the nearest sensitive receptors roads and other public vantage points.

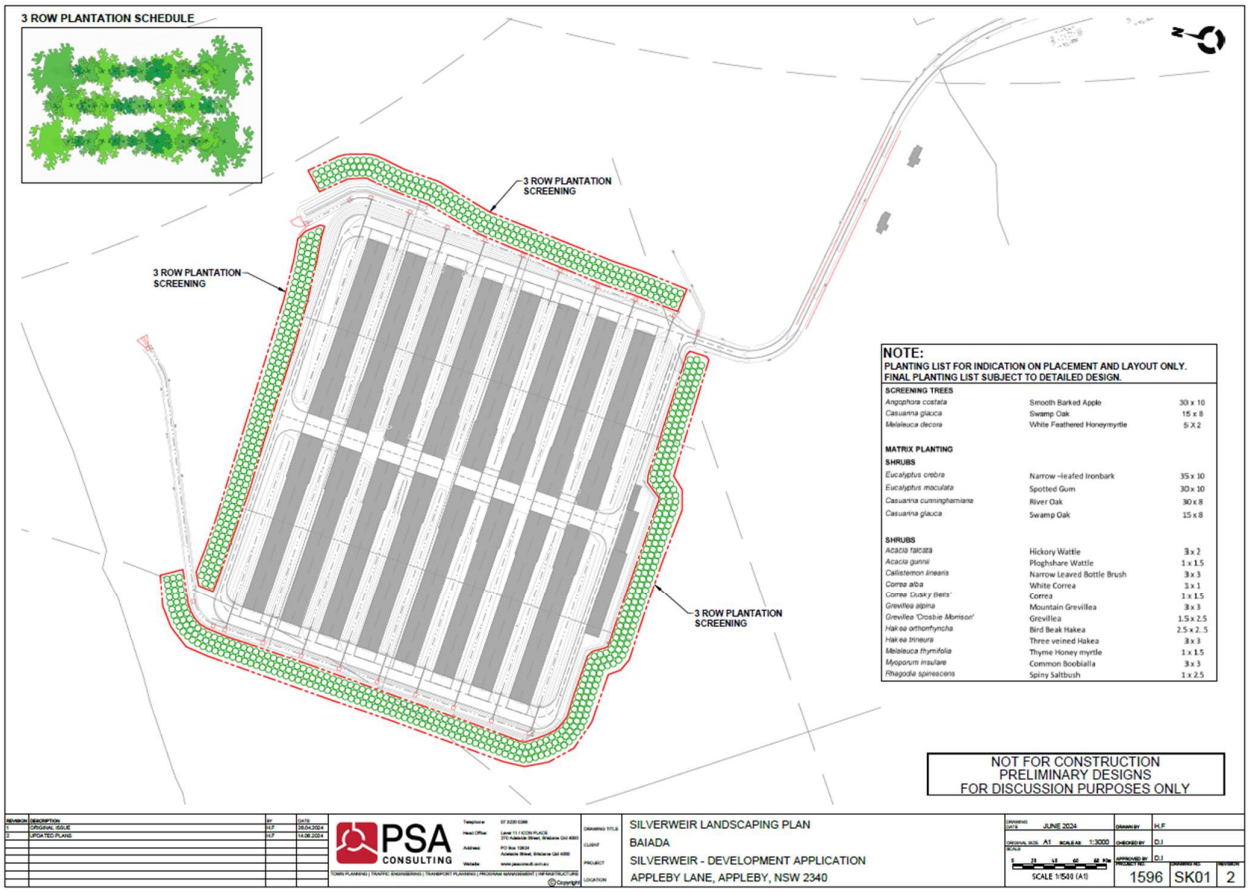

Figure 16: Landscaping Plan (PSA Consulting, 2024)

3.3.6 Stormwater Management

A Stormwater Management Strategy for the proposed poultry farm has been prepared by Hanlons Consulting and is included as **Appendix F.** As shown in ***Figure 17***, stormwater flows around the poultry farm will be collected via a series of swales running between and then directed through a network of stormwater pits, pipes, and open channels to the open swale drains along either side of the farm. The drains will be fitted with level spreaders to discharge stormwater as overland flows to the paddocks located on low side of the farm.

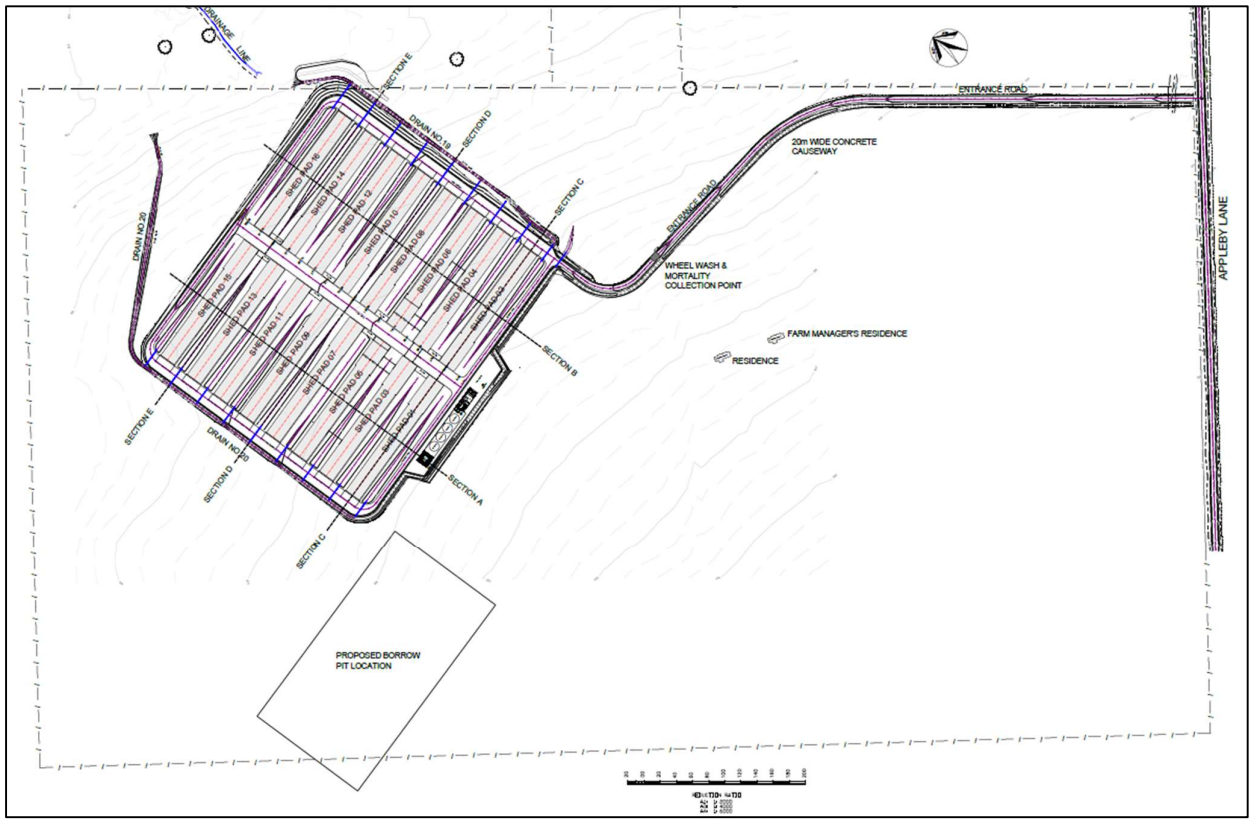

Figure 17: Stormwater Management Plan (Hanlons Consulting, 2024)

3.4 USES AND ACTIVITIES

Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 – 10 weeks. As such, there is an average of 5.2 production cycles. The production cycle generally follows the following steps:

- **Placement of day-old chicks**: Day-old chicks will be transported from Baiada's Country Road Hatchery in ventilated chick boxes in specially designed air-conditioned and insulated rigid trucks. On arrival, the day-old chicks will be placed on to the floor of the poultry sheds, within a smaller, confined area (the "brooding area") and given supplementary heating from gas heaters.
- **Growing:** The birds will be grown over a period of up to 8 weeks within the proposed sheds. During this time, the birds are able to move freely within the barns and are provided with access to drinking water and poultry feed.
- **Harvesting**: The birds will be harvested in a staggered manner from an age of 5 – 8 weeks with consideration of the live weight, customer / market demand, and animal welfare (maximum densities) standards. As a rural industry which deals with livestock, the harvesting regime is variable and needs to take into account variations in each of these factors, however, the typical regime to be adopted on the farm is identified in ***Figure 18*** below. The birds will be harvested by a contractor collection team (who will travel to the site via a bus), placed into plastic crates and onto a waiting truck for immediate transport to the processing plant. Collections typically occur during the night, but flexibility is required to enable bird collection to occur at any time in response to weather conditions (extreme heat / cold), equipment breakdowns and delays in other parts of the poultry cluster.
- **Clean Out:** Following the final collection when all birds have been removed from the poultry sheds, the spent bedding material (poultry litter) will be promptly removed from the sheds by a small front end loader, swept clean and the material transferred into a waiting truck and taken off transported off site for beneficial re-use or

disposal. Following dry cleaning the sheds are then sanitised with a high-pressure hose (to reduce the risk of pathogens and disease being spread between flocks) and then left open to allow washdown water to evaporate and the sheds to dry. Additional activities will include scrubbing feed pans, cleaning out water lines, cleaning the feed silos and scrubbing fan blades and other equipment.

- **Set Up:** Once the sheds are clean and dry, fresh bedding material, such as rice hulls, soft wood shavings or chopped straw, will be delivered to the farm from a local area supplier and spread over the floor of the poultry sheds. Supporting equipment including feeders, drinking lines, heaters and coolers are then set up ready for placement of a new batch.

Harvest	Modelling details		
	Harvesting day	% harvested	Cumulative %
Harvest 1	34	20	20
Harvest 2	42	30	50
Harvest 3	49	30	80
Harvest 4	55	20	100

Figure 18: Typical Harvesting Regime

All operations at the farm are governed by Baiada's operating requirements included as **Appendix N.** Strict adherence to the manual is the responsibility of the on-site managers. The farm will be overseen by 2 on-site managers and 4 full time staff. Contract staff are also used to assist with placement of day-old chicks, clean out and set up the sheds for at the end of each cycle. The poultry farm will also be operated in accordance with the conditions of an Environmental Protection License issued by the NSW EPA for the project prior to commencement of operations.

3.4.1 Hours of Operation

While most on-site activities will occur between 6am and 10pm, all aspects of the proposed poultry farm require the flexibility to operate up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in order to respond to periods of demand. Harvesting of birds, typically occurs during the nighttime period, but flexibility is required to enable bird collection to occur at any time in response to weather conditions (extreme heat / cold), equipment breakdowns and delays in other parts of the poultry cluster. Beyond the farm managers, additional full-time staff will typically be working at the site between 7am and 3:30pm.

3.4.2 Haulage

All access to the site will be achieved via a new crossover connecting to Appleby Lane. Appleby Lane is an approved B-Double Route allowing for movements of vehicles up to 26m B-Doubles. The haulage routes generally used by the proposed farm will include:

- Placement of day old chicks from the Country Road Hatchery via the Oxley Highway / Appleby lane.
- Provision of bedding material and poultry feed from Tangaratta Stockfeeds via Oxley Highway / Appleby Lane.
- Transport of grown broilers to the new Oakburn Processing Plant via Appleby Lane / Oxley Highway.

It is noted that the facility has been designed to accommodate A-Double Road trains, should their use on the Appleby Lane be approved at some point in the future. It is important to note that the use of A-Double is not proposed as part of this Development Application, and all assumptions with respect to heavy vehicles use are based on the proposed use of B-Doubles. **Table 5** provides a summary of traffic generation associated with the proposed farm.

As shown, it is anticipated that the proposed poultry farm will generate an average of approximately 14 heavy vehicle trips per day (7 incoming / 7 outgoing) and 12 light vehicle trips (6 incoming / 6 outgoing) however some peak periods associated with bird collections, shed clean out and set up at the end of each cycle.

While a majority of the heavy vehicles will typically occur during the day, bird collections does occur at night. During the night time collection, the heavy vehicles could be up to a maximum of 38 trips (19 incoming / 19 outgoing) on a peak collection night.

Table 5: Traffic Generation

GENERATION	VEHICLE TYPE	Trucks / Cycle	Trips / Cycle (Trucks x 2)	Trips / Year (5.2 Cycles)
HEAVY VEHICLES				
Chick Placement	Large Rigid / Semi / B-Double	13	26	135
Bedding Material	B-Double	21	42	216
Feed Deliveries	B-Double	169	338	1758
Bird Collection	B-Double	151	302	1568
Mortality Collection	Small Rigid	50	100	520
Floor Litter Collection	B-Double	34	68	352
Gas Deliveries	Semi-Trailer	16	31	162
			906 / Cycle	**4711 / Year**
LIGHT VEHICLES				
Staff Vehicles	Farm Staff Cars	6 Cars / Day		**4380 / Year**

3.4.3 Employment

As noted above, in order to provided 24/7 oversight to operations at the site and to be able to respond immediately to any operational or animal welfare issues, the farm will be overseen by 2 full time managers who will reside on the site. The farm managers will be supported by 4 full time staff who will typically be working at the site between 7am and 3:30pm.

3.5 INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

3.5.1 Power Supply

Essential Energy's network is currently connected to the water extraction pump located on the site and will be extended to service the broiler farm. Two (2) back up diesel generators are to be provided within the staff amenities building to power the farm in emergency situations when power supply is cut. 4,000L of diesel fuel is stored on site to enable immediate use of the generators when required.

3.5.2 Gas Supply

Gas is required to provide heating within the poultry sheds during cooler temperatures. Liquified petroleum gas (LPG) will be stored on site in a single 30kL tank supplied and installed by a licensed gas provider. The LPG will be topped up via tanker, that will access the site via the Oxley Highway and Appleby Lane on an as required basis.

3.5.3 Water Supply

Operation of the broiler farm will consume a total of 100 megalitres (ML) per year (0.274 ML per day averaged over a year), which includes water for shed ventilation, bird consumption, shed cleaning and vehicle wheel washes. The site is currently supplied with water from the Peel Regulated Water Source and has an existing Water Access Licence for 35 units on high security (90AL813391) and another for 423 units on general security (90AL813392). The Water Sharing Plan for the Peel River is currently allowing 100% of the allocation to be used for both high security and general security licenses.

Water is currently extracted via a 200 millimetre (mm) axial flow pump (90CA813393) located adjacent to the Peel River and contained within Lot 17 in DP 95993. Pipelines connecting this pump to the irrigation infrastructure on site are currently in use and will be extended to service the farm.

Drinking, cooling and cleaning water must meet minimum bacteriological standards before use. Good water quality is critical in good biosecurity as it minimises bacteria, viruses, algae and other organisms consumed by chickens in drinking water or exposed in shed cooling system. Water used for cleaning must also meet safe bacteriological standards to ensure the effectiveness of sanitation procedures.

Surface water may be contaminated with pathogens and must therefore, and in accordance with Baiada's National Biosecurity Manual (**Appendix N**) will be treated (e.g. by chlorination) before using. In this regard, water supplied to the farm is pumped to the onsite treatment area (adjacent to the staff amenities building) where it is passed through a sand filter and dosed with chlorine prior to use. The effectiveness of water treatments is monitored daily with corrective actions implemented by the on-site mangers if quality readings are outside of the designated parameters.

Water is held in the on-site storage tanks prior to use in the sheds. A total of 1.46ML is held on site, to provide around 5 days of supply to cover any breakdowns in water pumps or conveyance infrastructure.

Water to the proposed managers residences and staff amenities will be provided by rainwater tanks which can be topped up by tanker, if required. Water supply for poultry production (drinking water, cooling and cleaning) will be provided via the current water allocations sourced from the Peel River.

3.5.4 Waste Water

Minimal wastewater is generated in poultry production. A small amount of washdown water is generated within the sheds after depopulation and litter removal at the end of each production cycle site. This cleaning is undertaken using high-pressure hoses to minimise water use and the sheds are left open to allow any excess water to evaporate. Waste water from staff amenities and the manager's residences will be treated by a standard on-site septic system. A s68 approval for these systems will be required and can be conditioned accordingly.

4 STATUTORY CONTEXT

This section must identify the relevant statutory requirements for the project, including:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
- *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010*
- *Roads Act 1993*

4.1 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

A brief overview of the key statutory requirements for the project are presented in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Statutory Requirements

MATTER	GUIDANCE
Power to Grant Consent	***Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*** The proposed development is identified as Designated Development in accordance with Environment Planning and Assessment Regulations 2021 Schedule 3, Item 39: 39 Poultry Farm *(1) Development for the purposes of a poultry farm is designated development if the poultry farm—* *(a) accommodates more than 250,000 birds, or* *(b) is located within 500 metres of another poultry farm.* *(2) Development for the purposes of a poultry farm is designated development if the poultry farm—* *(a) accommodates more than 10,000 birds, and* *(b) is located within—* *(i) 100 metres of a natural waterbody or wetland, or* *(ii) a drinking water catchment, or* *(iii) 500 metres of a residential zone or 150 metres of a dwelling not associated with the development and, in the consent authority's opinion, considering topography and local meteorological conditions, is likely to significantly affect the amenity of the neighbourhood because of noise, odour, dust, lights, traffic or waste.* The proposed poultry farm will accommodate 960,000 birds and accordingly is classified as Designated Development. As the project is not classified as State or Regional Development under the *SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021*, Tamworth Regional Council is the Consent Authority for the Development Application.
Permissibility	The ***Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010*** (LEP) identifies the site within the Primary Production RU1 Zone. The proposed development is defined as an ***intensive livestock agriculture*** as follows: ***intensive livestock agriculture*** *means the keeping or breeding, for commercial purposes, of cattle, poultry, pigs, goats, horses, sheep or other livestock, and includes any of the following—*

	(a) dairies (restricted), *(b) feedlots,* *(c) pig farms,* *(d) poultry farms,* *but does not include extensive agriculture, aquaculture or the operation of facilities for drought or similar emergency relief.* Under the LEP Land Use Table, the development of ***intensive livestock agriculture*** within the Primary Production RU1 Zone is Permitted with Consent. There are no aspects of the development that are classified as prohibited development.
Other Approvals	**Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997:** The poultry farm is identified as a Scheduled Activity in accordance with Schedule 1, Item 22 of the POEO Act (see below). ***22 Livestock intensive activities*** *(1) This clause applies to the following activities—* ***bird accommodation**, meaning the accommodation of birds for commercial production.* *(2) Each activity referred to in Column 1 of the Table to this clause is declared to be a scheduled activity if it* meets the criteria set out in Column 2 of that Table.

Column 1	**Column 2**
Activity	***Criteria***
bird accommodation	*capacity to accommodate more than 250,000 birds at any time*

As such an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) will be required to be obtained prior to commencement of operations. The NSW EPA is triggered as an Integrated Authority for the Designated Development.

Local Government Act 1993: S68 Approval for 3 on-site septic systems will be required.

Roads Act 1993: S138 approval from Tamworth Regional Council will be required for construction of a new driveway connecting to Appleby Lane.

4.1.1 State Environmental Planning Policies

Table 7 identifies the applicability and implications of the SEPPs on the project.

Table 7: SEPP Applicability

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PLANNING SYSTEMS) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - State and Regional Development	**N/A.** The proposed development has an Estimated Development Cost o[redacted]nd as such is not classified as State or Regional Development.
Chapter 3 - Aboriginal Land	**N/A.** The site is not owned by a Local Aboriginal Land Council.
Chapter 4 - Concurrences and Consents	**N/A.** There are no concurrences of consents described in Chapter 4 applicable to the site.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas	**N/A.** Chapter 2 does not apply to the Tamworth Regional Council Area.

Chapter 3 - Koala Habitat Protection 2020	**Applies.** Chapter 3 of SEPP (Biodiversity Conservation) 2021 applies to assessment of development on the site. The principal aim of this Chapter aims to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population. In addressing this Chapter there are two questions to be considered. The first question requires consideration as to whether the land constitutes Potential Koala Habitat. 'Potential Koala Habitat' is defined in Chapter 3 as, *"...an area of native vegetation where trees of the type listed in Schedule 1 (Koala feed tree species) constitute at least 15% of the total number of trees in the upper or lower strata of the tree component"*. As no trees were present within the impact area, which is currently used for cropping, the land is not considered to be potential koala habitat and no further consideration of this chapter is required.
Chapter 4 - Koala Habitat Protection 2021	**N/A.** This chapter does not apply to the site.
Chapter 5 – River Murray Lands	**N/A.** This chapter does not apply to the site.
Chapter 6 – Water Catchments	**N/A.** The site is not located within a nominated water catchment.
Chapter 13 – Strategic Conversation Planning	**N/A.** The site is not contained within the Land Application Map.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (RESILIENCE AND HAZARDS) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - Coastal Management	**N/A.** The site is not located in the Coastal Zone.
Chapter 3 - Hazardous and Offensive Development	**Applies.** In accordance with the requirements of Chapter 3 a screening of storage volumes of dangerous goods has been undertaken (see Section 4.15). The PHA found that the operation of the proposed development meets the criteria laid down in HIPAP 4 Risk Criteria for Land Use Safety Planning and would not cause any risk, significant or minor, to the community.
Chapter 4 - Remediation of Land	**Applies.** The site has been historically cleared and has been used for cropping, and grazing activities. Based on historic aerial photography, the impact areas associated with the development are located on land that has been in agricultural production since at least 1960 and have not been used of any industrial or rural industry purposes which would indicate a risk of contamination. Accordingly, the site is expected to be of minimal risk to contamination.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - Infrastructure	**Division 17:** The proposed development involves works on Appleby Lane being the construction of a new driveway to the site. The extent of works is shown on the development plans included

	as **Appendix A** and will be prepared in accordance with Council's relevant standards and guidelines. All works will be subject to relevant s138 approval and can be conditioned accordingly.
Chapter 3 - Educational Establishments and Childcare Facilities	**N/A.** The project does not involve an Educational Establishment of Childcare Facility.
Chapter 4 - Major Infrastructure Corridors	**N/A.** The site is not within or adjacent to a major infrastructure corridor.
Chapter 5 - Three Ports-Port Botany, Port Kembla and Newcastle	**N/A.** The site is not located on the within the relevant port areas.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**Assessment & Compliance**
Chapter 2 - Western Sydney Employment Area	**N/A.** The site is not located on the within Western Sydney Employment Area.
Chapter 3 - Advertising and Signage	**N/A.** No advertising or signage under Chapter 3 is proposed as part of this application.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (RESOURCES AND ENERGY) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries	**N/A.** The project does not involve mining or extractive industry.
Chapter 3 - Extractive Industries	**N/A.** The project does not involve mining or extractive industry.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PRIMARY PRODUCTION) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
Chapter 2 - Primary Production and Rural Development	**N/A.** The project does not involve primary production or rural development regulated by Chapter 2.
Chapter 3 - Central Coast Plateau Areas	**N/A.** The project is not located in the central Coast Plateau Area.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PRECINCTS – EASTERN HARBOUR CITY) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
All	**N/A.** The project is not located in a listed State Significant Precinct.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PRECINCTS – CENTRAL RIVER CITY) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
All	**N/A.** The project is not located in a listed State Significant Precinct.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PRECINCTS – WESTERN PARKLAND CITY) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**

All	**N/A.** The project is not located in a listed State Significant Precinct.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PRECINCTS - REGIONAL) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY**
All	**N/A.** The project is not located in a listed State Significant Precinct.

4.1.2 Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010

4.1.2.1 Zoning and Permissibility

Under the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010,* the subject site is located in the RU1 Primary Production Zone. The proposed development falls under Tamworth LEP definition of **Intensive Livestock Agriculture** which means:

> *the keeping or breeding, for commercial purposes, of cattle, poultry, pigs, goats, horses, sheep or other livestock, and includes any of the following—*
>
> *(a) dairies (restricted),*
> *(b) feedlots,*
> *(c) pig farms,*
> *(d) poultry farms,*
>
> *but does not include extensive agriculture, aquaculture or the operation of facilities for drought or similar emergency relief.*

In accordance with clause 3 of the Tamworth LEP development of an **Intensive Livestock Agriculture** located in the Primary Production Zone (RU1) is identified as development that is **Permitted with Consent**.

The objectives for the RU1 Primary Production Zone are as follows:

- *To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.*
- *To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.*
- *To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*
- *To permit subdivision only where it is considered by the Council to be necessary to maintain or increase agricultural production.*
- *To restrict the establishment of inappropriate traffic generating uses along main road frontages.*
- *To ensure sound management of land which has an extractive or mining industry potential and to ensure that development does not adversely affect the extractive industry.*
- *To permit development for purposes where it can be demonstrated that suitable land or premises are not available elsewhere.*

The proposed development involves a primary industry (poultry broiler farm) to be constructed within an existing cleared portion of the site. While the farm will be accommodated on ~ 19 ha of the site, the remaining 427 ha of the property will continue to be used for extensive agriculture, cropping and grazing. As such, the proposed development will not result in the alienation of agricultural land.

The site is located within an active agricultural area and surrounded by a number of other poultry broiler farms and other rural enterprises and the proposed farm is complementary to the surrounding land uses and zones. Further, the development of farms will support expansion of poultry cluster across the New England Region.

As demonstrated in this EIS, the proposed development has been subject to a rigorous environmental assessment which confirms the project can be undertaken in a manner which minimise potential conflict with adjoining zones and sensitive receptors. As such the proposed development is considered to comply with the objectives of the zone.

4.1.3 Tamworth Development Control Plan 2010

An assessment against the relevant provisions of the *Tamworth Development Control Plan 2010* is provided below.

Table 8: Other Types of Development Controls

GUIDELINES	COMPLIANCE
Parking	
• Parking must be provided as per the Schedule in Appendix 1. • Where calculation of parking spaces required results in a fraction of a space, the total required number of spaces will be the next highest whole number. • Parking and traffic requirements will be based on consideration of: ○ Likely peak usage times ○ The availability of public transport ○ Likely demand for off street parking generated by the development; ○ Existing traffic street network; and ○ Efficiency of existing parking provision in the location • Comply with AS2890.1 Parking Facilities Off Street Car Parking and AS2890.6 Parking Facilities Off Street Parking for People with a Disability • Manoeuvring areas within the development must be designed to accommodate a B99 vehicle under AS2890.1 Parking Facilities Off Street Parking. • Where existing premises are being redeveloped or their use changed, the following method of calculation shall apply:- a. Determine the parking requirements of the previous or existing premises in accordance with any existing development consent b. Determine the parking requirement of the proposed development in accordance with Appendix A; c. Subtract the number of spaces determined in (a) from the number of spaces calculated in (b) d. The difference calculated in (c) represents the total number of parking spaces to be provided either in addition to the existing on-site car parking or as a cash-in-lieu contribution to Council where applicable.	**Complies.** *Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010* does not specify a parking rate for a Poultry Farm and as such, sufficient parking is to be provided to cater for staff and visitors on a first principles basis. In this regard, the farm will employ 6 full time staff (2 mangers + 4 staff) and is provide with 10 parking spaces. Accordingly, the sufficient parking is provided for staff and visitors to the site. The design of the staff car parking area has been reviewed with regard to Australian Standard 2890.1 (2004). The design meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of that Standard with regard to the dimensions of the parking bays, aisles and driveway access road. The internal layout of the poultry farm roadways was also assessed by PSA for suitability by considering the swept paths of the heavy vehicles expected to use the site. The proposed road layouts are satisfactory for manoeuvring of those vehicles. All swept path movements have been provided within the Traffic Impact Assessment (**Appendix G**).
Landscaping	

• Location and grouping of plant types shall be multi-functional providing privacy, security, shading and recreation functions. • Landscaping or shade structures shall be provided in outdoor car parking areas where >10 spaces are required, to provide shading and soften the visual impact of large hard surfaces. • Landscaping shall comprise low maintenance, drought and frost tolerant species.	**Complies.** The proposed development includes screen planning in a 3 line configuration supporting a mix of shrubs and trees. The vegetation is a mix of locally native plants which will support the local fauna and ecosystems. Screen planting is proposed along the western, southern and eastern sides of the farm to soften potential views of the farm from the nearest sensitive receptors public roads and other vantage points.
Outdoor Lighting	
• All developments shall demonstrate compliance with AS4282 Control of Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting. • Sweeping lasers or searchlights or similar high intensity light for outdoor advertising or entertainment, when projected above the horizontal is prohibited. • Illuminated advertising signs should be extinguished outside of operating hours, or 11pm, whichever is earlier.	**Complies.** Minimal outdoor lighting is required, but where necessary will be designed to comply with AS4282. No lasers, searchlights, or high intensity lights are proposed.
Outdoor Advertising/Signage	
• Where there is potential for light spill to adjoining properties, all illuminated signage shall be fitted with a timer switch to dim or turn off by 11pm each night • Signage must comply with SEPP 64 – Advertising and Signage Schedule 1 Assessment Criteria. • "Special promotional advertisements" may be installed in accordance with clause 25 of SEPP 64 – Advertising and Signage provided that the sign does not compromise any Public Art or the integrity of the space in which it is located in the main streets, public parks and gardens and major venues across the region's city, towns, and villages. • Advertising in rural zones may only: ○ Advertising facility, activity or service located on the land; or ○ Direct travelling public to a tourist facility or building or place of scientific historical or scenic interest within the area. Cannot include names of proprietary products or services or sponsoring businesses. Each sign must be sited a minimum distance of 1km from each other. • External illumination to signs must be top mounted and directed downwards. • The following types of signs are not acceptable: ○ Portable signs within public footways and road reserves including variable message signs, A Frame and Sandwich Boards;	**Complies.** No illuminated signage is proposed or required. Signage will be compliant with the outdoor signage requirements. Appropriate conditions can be included within any approval.

○ Outdoor furniture (including chairs, bollards and umbrellas) advertising products such as coffee, alcohol or soft drink; ○ A roof sign or wall sign projecting above the roof or wall to which it is affixed; o Flashing or intermittently illuminated signs; ○ Advertisements on parked motor vehicles or trailers (whether or not registered) for which the principal purpose is for advertising; ○ Signs fixed to trees, lights, telephone or power poles; ○ Signs which could reduce road safety by adversely interfering with the operation of traffic lights or authorized road signs; ○ Any sign which would in the opinion of Council, be unsightly, objectionable or injurious to the amenity of the locality, any natural landscape, public reserve or public place; ○ Numerous small signs and advertisements carrying duplicate information; and ○ Overhead banners and bunting, except in the form of temporary advertisement.	
Farm Stay Accommodation	
• Details of the activities offered should accompany the Development Application which must include some farm related activities. • Guests are restricted a maximum of 14 days per visit.	**Not Applicable.** There is no Farm Stay Accommodation proposed as part of this development application.
Bushfire Prone Land	
• The plans prepared to accompany a DA located in a bushfire prone area, being land that is identified on a map certified by the Rural Fire Service, must illustrate the required Asset Protection Zone (APZ). • DAs for development located in a bushfire prone area must be accompanied by either a Bushfire Attack Level Self Assessment (BAL) or a Bushfire Planning and Design Report (BPAD). • Where the DA is accompanied by a BPAD report, Council's bushfire assessment fee will not be applicable.	**Complies.** The site is located on land that is mapped by the RFS as bush fire prone land. *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP) applies to all DAs on bush fire prone land. As required by Section 1.4 of the PBP, Firebird ecoSultants Pty Ltd has been engaged to prepare a Bush Fire Assessment Report (BFAR) to address the requirements that are applicable to the proposed. A Copy of this report in Included as **Appendix J**. The assessment concludes that, on completion, the proposed development will ensure that the development is located in an area that has an acceptable bushfire hazard level (i.e. ≤BAL-LOW), and with the implementation of the recommendations, is considered to be appropriately protected from bushfire and complies with the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection.

Table 6: Environmental Controls

GUIDELINES	COMPLIANCE
Environmental Effects	
• The application documentation shall identify any potential environmental impacts of the development and demonstrate how they will be mitigated. These impacts may relate to: ○ Traffic ○ Flood liability ○ Slope ○ Construction impacts ○ Solid and Liquid Waste ○ Air quality (odour and pollution) ○ Noise emissions ○ Water quality ○ Sustainability	**Complies.** This EIS, the development plans and associated specialist reports have identified, taken into account and assessed the potential environmental effects of the proposed development.
Soil and Erosion Control	
• Runoff shall be managed to prevent any land degradation including offsite sedimentation. • Reference shall be made to the NSW Governments Managing urban stormwater: soils and construction, Volume 1 (available from Landcom), commonly referred to as "The Blue Book". • Cut and fill will be minimised and the site stabilised during and after construction. • Arrangements in place to prompt revegetation of earthworks to minimise erosion.	**Complies.** A Stormwater Management Strategy has been prepared by Hanlons Consulting and is included as **Appendix F.** This report describes the principles and operation of the proposed stormwater system as well as the primary components of the drainage system. The increase in impervious areas and alteration of the natural topography, due to land development, will increase and concentrate stormwater flows. This has the potential to impact on flow regimes and cause erosion of the natural downstream drainage network and associated waterways. To avoid any adverse impact on the downstream drainage systems, the site's stormwater management system must be designed to ensure the safe conveyance of flows throughout the site and within the capacity of the downstream drainage systems in a healthy environmental state for Ecological Sustainable Development. The stormwater was modelled using the DRAINS stormwater modelling package to ensure that there was no worsening of post development flows compared to existing conditions. In this regard, the site was modelled for the 1 EY, 0.2EY, 10% AEP, 5% AEP & 1% AEP design storms to cover both the minor and major events. The results show that inter-shed drains function as individual detention structures and result in an overall reduction of the developed flows without the need for a large detention basin. Standard erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented during construction in accordance with Managing urban stormwater: soils

	and construction, Volume 1 and can be conditioned accordingly.
Vegetation	
• Development design shall accommodate the retention of any significant trees and vegetation	**Complies.** Due to the location of the project within the Category 1 Exempt Land, the ongoing cultivation of the site, no substantive vegetation clearing is required to facilitate the proposed development and minimal impacts on significant flora and fauna are anticipated.
Waste Management	
• General waste storage and collection arrangements shall be specified.	**Complies.** Waste management is critical to the operation of an efficient poultry farm. Typically, broiler farms generate little waste that cannot be recycled or beneficially re-used. The applicant will adopt measures to ensure that all waste generated from activities on the site are reused and recycled where practical or otherwise managed and disposed of in a manner that will not cause environmental harm.
Noise	
• Where relevant, applications are to contain information about likely noise generation and the method of mitigation.	**Complies.** A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by SoundIN to assess the potential noise impacts of the proposed development against the relevant acoustic criteria and is included as **Appendix I**. A summary of the acoustic assessment is provided below. Modelling undertake for the proposed development, indicates that noise emissions from construction, operation and road noise, will not result in any non-compliances to the relevant assessment criteria and as such will not result in any unacceptable noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors.
Geology	
• The design process must give consideration to the potential impact of erosive soils, saline soils, soils of low wet strength, highly reactive soils and steep slopes and document how these constraints are addressed.	**Complies.** The civil design for the proposed broiler farm has sought to minimise earthworks through aligning the proposed sheds with the slope of the land, adoption a stepped approach to shed floor levels (i.e. shed are progressively stepped down the land, and balancing cut and fill. Adoption of this approach (rather than a single level farm) has minimised the amount of cut and fill across the farm site to ~2m of Cut and ~2m of fill, excluding the perimeter road and stormwater swales). The Civil Engineering Plans showing the proposed earthworks included in **Appendix A**.
Landscaping Poultry Farms	

• A cash bond or bank guarantee to the value of $1500 per shed and valid for a period of 5 years, must be submitted to Council prior to issue of a Construction Certificate.	**Complies.** Noted and can be conditioned.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

5.1 ENGAGEMENT CARRIED OUT

In accordance with Schedule 2, Section 3(1) of the Environment Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000, a request for the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) was submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment on 01 November 2023. The SEARs were received by the Applicant on 29 November 2023 and the response table is included as **Appendix Q**.

The Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) requested that the Applicant consult with the relevant Local and State government authorities, service providers and community groups, and address any issues they raise in the EIS. The surrounding landowners and occupiers that are likely to be impacted by the proposal were recommended to be consulted. The SEARs also requested that details of the consultation that has been carried out and issues raised must be included in the EIS.

This section outlines the consultation activities undertaken to inform the scope of this Environmental Impact Statement.

5.1.1 Government Departments and Agencies

An overview of the extent of consultation undertaken with Government Departments and Agencies is provided below.

- Submission of a Request for the SEARs (dated 29 November 2023) with the Department of Planning and Environment in accordance with Section 173(1) of the Environment Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021;

Following receipt of the SEARs, further consultation was undertaken with the following agencies, local governments and the local community:

- Submission of a Request for EIS Requirements were sent to the following agencies on 19 January 2024;
  - Department of Planning and Environment
  - Department of Primary Industries
  - Transport for NSW
  - NSW Rural Fire Service
  - WaterNSW
  - Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council

Responses from the above agencies were received as follows:

- NSW Rural Fire Service requested a Bushfire Assessment on 22 February 2024; and
- No responses were received from the other agencies.

5.1.2 Community Consultation

The SEARs included the requirement for the proponent to undertake *"effective and genuine community consultation"*. In response, the Comms Team was engaged by the Applicant to develop and execute a Community Consultation Action Plan. The Community Consultation Action Plan was prepared to guide communication and engagement activities across the local community and with specific stakeholders, in and around the proposed Poultry Farm. A copy of the Community Consultation Report prepared by the Comms Team is provided as **Appendix M** and provides a detailed account of the activities undertaken and response provided. An overview is provided below.

5.1.2.1 Community Consultation Activities

Community consultation is a key requirement of the EIS process and ensures the community are provided sufficient information regarding a proposed development and given adequate opportunity to consider the potential impacts and raise any concerns they may have.

Table 9 outlines the communication and engagement activities undertaken by The Comms Team in order to consult with the neighbouring residents and business owners and broader community. Copies of all communications materials (letters etc) are provided in the Community Consultation Report prepared by the Comms Team and included as **Appendix M.**

Table 9: Community Consultation Activities

ACTIVITY / TOOL	TIMING
A letter was sent to 20 immediate neighbours and sensitive receivers shown as a red dot in **Figure 11.** The material provided project information, consultation team contact details and an offer to meet personally with the project team.	05 May 2024
Comms Team management of the consultation phone number and email.	06 – 20 May 2024
One on One meetings with the project team were offered to interested residents and businesses within the project area, and other stakeholders or community members with an interest.	06 – 20 May 2024

5.2 COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.2.1 Summary of Community Responses

In response to the above community consultation activities, the following responses were received (see Table 10).

Table 10: Community Responses

DATE STAKEHOLDER	FEEDBACK	INFLUENCE ON EIS
14/05/2024 (Call) 20/05/2024 (In Person Meeting) Name Withheld Local Resident	• Received letter and called the project team with concerns about project impact on their property. • Project team offered an in-person meeting to discuss any concerns or questions. • In-person meeting was held 20 May 2024. • Concerns raised about construction and roofing materials i.e. glare impacts • Request for trees to be planted to assist with screening of the farm. • Discussed visual impact - Agreed to be minor impact • Concerns raised about traffic impacts on Appleby Lane and vehicular access to the site - Addressed by upgrade to existing entrance of the farm	• **Visual Impacts:** In response to the feedback the roofing material has been updated to include a Colourbond Roof, rather than a standard metallic roof. Additional screening vegetation surrounding the farm has also been added to reduce visibility from public and private vantage points. • **Traffic Impacts:** Potential Traffic Impacts have been addressed in the EIS and in the Traffic Impact Assessment. Upgrades to the entrance driveway are proposed. • **Property Values:** The proposed farm is a rural use located in a rural area. The surrounding area already contains a number of existing poultry farms (e.g. Gidley & Taradale) and as such the addition of a well located and screened poultry farm will not result in significant impacts on the character or value of the surrounding area.

	• Confirmation of one farm under the application • Concern raised about reduction of property value because of proposed farm • Positive reception to the inclusion of a managers house on-site • Little concern for odour impact • Enquiry into further comments from neighbours as their understanding as most are opposed • Request for ongoing updates as the proposal develops	• **Odour Impacts:** Potential Odour Impacts have been addressed in the EIS and in the Air Quality Impact Assessment. • **Future Farms:** This application proposed construction of a single farm on the South Side of Appleby Lane. No Farms are proposed on the property to the north side of Appleby Lane. • **Management Oversight:** 2 Managers Dwellings are proposed to be constructed on the site to ensure 24/7 oversight of operations
17/05/2024 20/05/2024 Name Withheld Local Resident	• Received letter and called the project team with concerns about project impact and future plans. • Project team offered an in-person meeting to discuss with any concerns or questions. • In-person meeting was held 20 May 2024. • Primary concern was visual/light impact from the trucks and farm • Request for more information on noise and light impacts during clean-out • Stakeholder was advised that reporting was able to be submitted to the DA • No issue raised on the position of the sheds on the farm	• **Visual Impacts:** In response to the feedback the roofing material has been updated to include a Colourbond Roof, rather than a standard metallic roof. Additional screening vegetation surrounding the farm has also been added to reduce visibility from public and private vantage points. • **Lighting:** Minimal outdoor lighting is required, but where necessary will be designed to comply with AS4282. No lasers, searchlights, or high intensity lights are proposed. During nighttime collection of live birds, lighting is kept low to minimise disturbance to the birds. Trucks are not left idling, and lights are turned off while loading takes place.
	• Concerns raised about catching crews and potential theft - Stakeholder was advised of the vetting process and presence of a managers house • Raised concern for potential intent to build a farm on the block adjoining her property – requested early advice of any plans in this regard, so she can vacate property in advance • Request for ongoing updates as the development progresses	• **Catching Crews:** Catching crews are bused to the site by the contractor and all activities are overseen by the farm manager. All operations are undertaken in accordance with Baiada's farm management and bio-security protocols, which requires oversight of catching crews at all times. As such, there is minimal opportunities for crews to leave the site. • **Future Farms:** This application proposed construction of a single farm on the South Side of Appleby Lane. No Farms are proposed on the property to the north side of Appleby Lane.
20/05/2024 Name Withheld Local Resident	• Received letter and emailed the project team with negative feedback on the location chosen for the proposed poultry farm citing environmental concern.	• The objection to the development is acknowledged. The submitted EIS provides a detailed assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the farm and demonstrates that it can be undertaken in a manner compliant with all relevant environmental standards.
20/05/2024 Name Withheld Local Resident	• Received letter and emailed the project team with negative feedback on the project.	• The objection to the development is acknowledged. The submitted EIS provides a detailed assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the farm and demonstrates that it can be undertaken in a manner compliant with all relevant environmental standards.
21/05/2024 Name Withheld Local Resident	• Received letter and emailed the project team expressing interest in further discussion of	• The balance of the site will be retained for agricultural purposes including cropping and grazing. Such arrangement can be explored.

	potential leasing arrangement for cattle grazing.	

Based on the response provided, the level of community interest and geographical extent of interest remains local to the Tamworth region. No comment or interests were received from other regional areas or interstate.

5.2.2 Community Consultation Outcomes/Key Issues

At the completion of the consultation process, the Comms Team concluded that *"The process undertaken was thorough and enabled a genuine opportunity for consultation. Stakeholders were provided with multiple channels to receive information and provide feedback."*

The consultation undertaken showed that there was general interest in the project and the activities undertaken increased community awareness about the proposed development. Based on the responses, there is mixed support for the project as well as concerns regarding the potential impact on the surrounding properties. These concerns raised from the neighbouring stakeholders have been addressed as part of the project design and assessment processes. Overall, the feedback from the stakeholders have been taken into consideration through the development of this project.

5.3 ENGAGEMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT

On-going community engagement will be carried out should the project be approved. Baiada will continue to work closely with the community and stakeholders. A summary of the proposed on-going engagement is provided below.

5.3.1 Engagement Activities for Construction and Operational Phases

5.3.1.1 Construction

During construction, the applicant will prepare and publish on their website, regular construction updates. This will provide the general public with up-to-date information on the project status which is easily accessible. The nearest residents to the site will be provided with a project update at key stages throughout construction and be provided with contact details for the construction manager who can be contacted as required.

Baiada will also prepare and implement a construction management plan to ensure the potential impacts associated with the construction phase are appropriately mitigated and managed. The construction management plan will include the requirements for project updates and a procedure for receipt of feedback from the community and first nations groups including provision of a response.

5.3.1.2 Operational Phase

The farm will adopt a standard process for receipt of enquiries, questions and complaints, handing, responding and recording.

5.3.2 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

In accordance with Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979,* the EIS will be publicly notified during which time the general public will be invited to make comment and forward submissions to the Consent Authority (Department of Planning and Environment) in relation to the proposed development. Advertising will occur for a minimum period of 28 days.

6 ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION OF IMPACTS

This section provides a summary of the results of the technical assessments undertaken in relation to the potential impacts of the project, as well as the mitigation and management actions proposed to avoid unacceptable impacts.

6.1 BIODIVERSITY

As request in the SEARS, Wildthing Environmental Consultant was engaged to undertake a Biodiversity Assessment Report (included as **Appendix D**) to assess the potential biodiversity impacts of the project and the relevant statutory considerations including:

- *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017*
- *NSW Biodiversity Conservation (BC) Act 2016 & Biodiversity Offsets Scheme*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
- *Local Land Services Act 2013*
- *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*
- *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

In accordance with the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act), the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and potential entry into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) is applicable to certain development activities based on specific criteria.

Historically the subject land (the impact area) and study area has been cleared as a result of the past agricultural activities. Aerial photos from 1961 show the subject land and study area to be largely void of native trees and no revegetation has occurred since this time.

No areas of land category within the meaning of Part 5A of Local Land Services Act 2013 (LLS Act) were mapped within the subject land or study area on the Transitional Vegetation Regulatory Map with no draft Native Vegetation Regulatory was available for the site at the time of the assessment.

In determining the category of land, the site was assessed under the regulated land criteria and determined to be Category 1 – Exempt Land. As the impact area occurs within an area used for ongoing cropping and the land is identified as Category 1-exempt land within the meaning of Part 5A of LLS Act, the proposed development is exempt under Section 6.8 (3) of the BC Act from further consideration under the BAM.

Whilst clearing of native vegetation on land that meets the definition of Category 1 – Exempt Land does not require assessment or offsetting under the BC Act, prescribed impacts as outlined in Chapter 6 of the BAM (2020) must still be considered on Category 1 – Exempt Land.

6.1.1 The Existing Environment

To confirm the existing environment, Wildthing Environmental Consultants undertook detailed surveys, including vegetation mapping, completion of BAM plots, targeted threatened flora searches, targeted threatened fauna surveys, as well as assessment of nearby vegetation patches. As noted above, the subject land has been largely cleared as a result of past grazing and cropping activities which have resulted in the presence large areas of open grassland used for grazing and other areas of cropping land. Some smaller areas of native remnant woodland were present in the surrounding area.

On site vegetation surveys of the broader property determined that the site contained the following five (5) vegetation assemblages:

- PCT 516 - Grey Box grassy woodland or open forest of the Nandewar Bioregion and New England Tableland Bioregion.
- PCT 78 - River Red Gum riparian tall woodland / open forest wetland in the Nandewar Bioregion and Brigalow Belt South Bioregion.

- Grassland (grazing).
- Cropping Areas.
- Aquatic Dam.

The 17.34ha impact area located in the centre of the subject site will be almost entirely contained within a highly disturbed portion of land used for cropping. A smaller area (0.22ha) of grassland will also be impacted. No trees occur within the impact area. A vegetation map showing these assemblages is provided in ***Figure 19***.

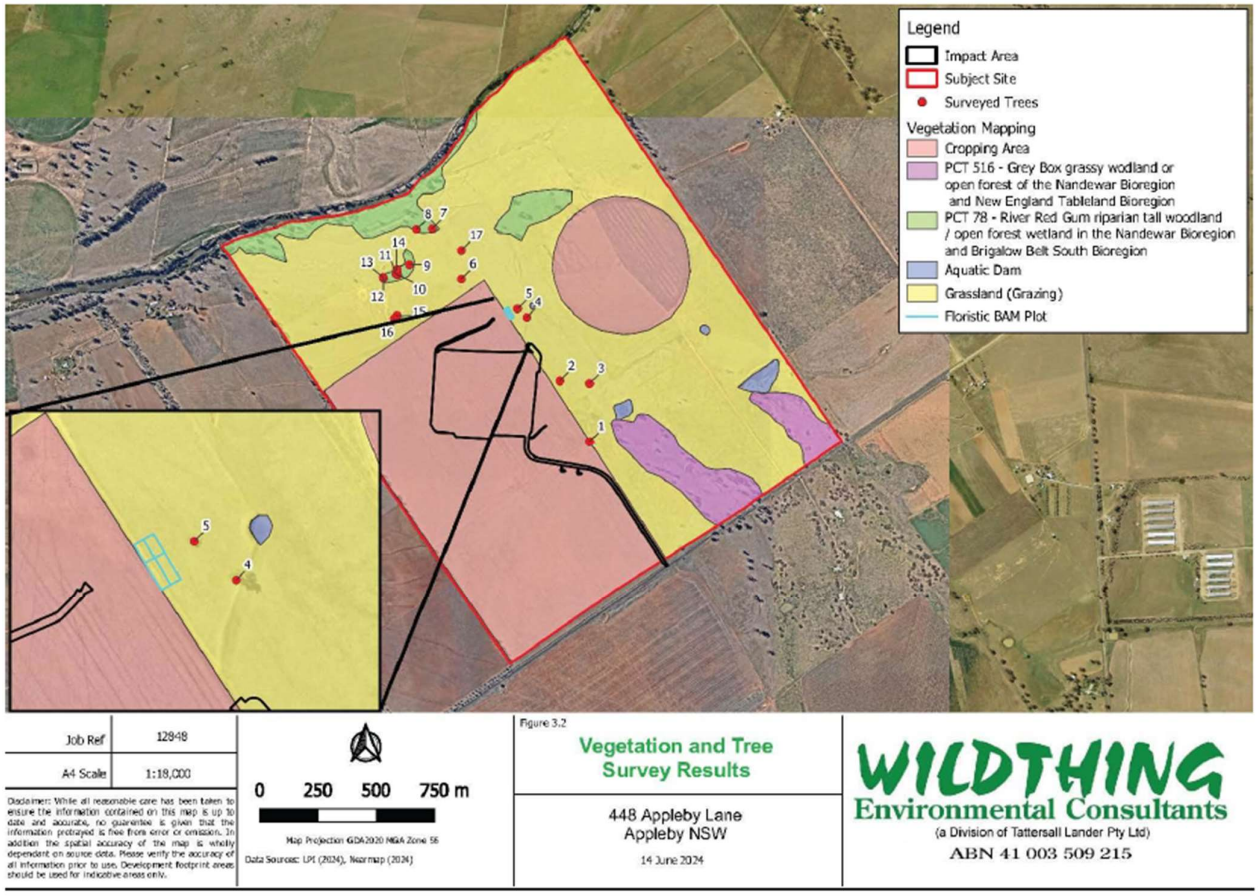

Figure 19: Vegetation Map (Wildthing, 2024)

6.1.2 Matters of Ecological Significance

No threatened ecological communities were observed or likely to be present within the subject land. A total of 42 nationally threatened species (12 plant & 30 fauna) were recorded on the DCCEEW database as occurring or having potential habitat available within 10km of the subject land and accordingly were targeted during surveys.

No threatened flora or fauna species were recorded during fieldwork or past ecological surveys (Ecotone Environmental Consultants, 2009) within the impact area or subject site. In addition, no suitable habitat was present within the impact area for the addressed flora species.

A number of microchiropteran (microbat) species were recorded during the bat call survey. These species were Chalinolobus gouldii (Gould's Wattled Bat) and Austronomus australis (White-striped Free-tailed Bat). Calls attributed to the Genus Vespadelus sp. were likely Vespadelus vulturnus (Little Forest Bat). Calls ascribed to the Nyctophilus Genus. were likely to be either N. geoffroyii (Lesser Long-eared Bat) or N. gouldii (Gould's Long-eared Bat). The impact area contained suitable foraging/hunting habitat for microchiropteran bats, however no roosting habitat in the form of tree hollows or caves, culverts or similar man-made structures were present.

6.1.3 Potential Koala Habitat

Chapter 3 of SEPP (Biodiversity Conservation) 2021 applies to assessment of development on the site. The principal aim of this Chapter aims to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population.

In addressing this Chapter there are two questions to be considered. The first question requires consideration as to whether the land constitutes Potential Koala Habitat. 'Potential Koala Habitat' is defined in Chapter 3 as, *"...an area of native vegetation where trees of the type listed in Schedule 1 (Koala feed tree species) constitute at least 15% of the total number of trees in the upper or lower strata of the tree component"*.

As no trees were present within the impact area, which is used for cropping, the land is not considered to be potential koala habitat.

6.1.4 Matters of National Environmental Significance

Considerations have been made to the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act (1999)*. It was determined that the proposal would not result in any significant impact on any Matter of National Environmental Significance (MNES).

6.1.5 Potential Impacts

6.1.5.1 Direct Impacts

The direct impacts arising from the project include the removal of 17.34ha of cropping land and 0.63ha of disturbed grassland. This impact will come from the construction phase of the proposed development. This impact will be permanent and would occur through vegetation clearing. Mitigation measures outlined below will be included as part of the construction and operation face to help minimise the potential impacts to biodiversity values that remain present within the study area.

6.1.5.2 Indirect Impacts

Indirect impacts associated with the project include:

- Inadvertent impacts on adjacent habitat or vegetation;
- Reduced viability of habitat due to noise, dust or light spill; and
- Inadvertent impacts from fertiliser drive, waste, pest management.

Mitigation measures have been provided to reduce the risk of indirect impacts are proposed.

6.1.6 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation and management measures proposed to minimise the risks of any residual impacts.

6.1.6.1 Construction Phase

Clearing of native vegetation

If any additional clearing is required, where possible, construction works should avoid any impact to native vegetation. Where unavoidable, works should minimise impacts as follows:

- clearing limits will be clearly marked to prevent unnecessary clearing beyond the extent of the development footprint.

Inadvertent impact to biodiversity values

Priority will be given during construction to avoid any inadvertent impact to significant biodiversity values within the study area. Avoidance measures should include the following:

- all material stockpiles, vehicle parking and machinery storage will be located within cleared areas proposed for clearing, and not in areas of native vegetation that are to be retained; and

- implementation of temporary stormwater controls during construction and to ensure that discharges outside the development footprint are consistent with existing conditions.

Clearing of fauna habitat, resulting in fauna injury and/or mortality

There are no habitat trees that are required to be removed as a result of the proposal. If any additional clearing is required:

- Any animals injured during construction should be taken immediately to a Vet for treatment. Any animals suspected to require rehabilitation would be delivered post-veterinary care to an appropriate animal rehabilitator.

Minimise weed infestations

The following measures should be implemented to prevent exotic plant material from entering/exiting the study area:

- no imported/exported material to be permitted unless it has been inspected and confirmed to be free of dirt and mud which may contain weed seeds and vegetative material such as bulbs, root fragment, tubers or rhizomes; and
- vehicles and machinery to be clean of soils, vegetation and seeds that have been brushed off or washed down prior to entering the subject land.

A clean down register to be maintained at the entry of the subject land.

6.1.6.2 Operational Phase

Avoiding operational impacts on flora and fauna

- Vehicles should not drive off the designated parking area into vegetation within the lot to reduce impact to resident fauna and flora within the study area during the operations phase

Treat existing weed infestations

- As a part of maintenance within the study area any high threat weeds known to occur will be controlled in accordance with appropriate DPI guidelines. Guidelines for the treatment of high threat weeds can be sourced within the DPI website (DPI, 2018).

Reduce impacts of artificial lighting

- Any artificial lighting used for security at night should be angled/directed downwards and away from retained vegetation to avoid excessive light pollution affecting adjacent habitat.

6.2 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) was engaged to undertake an Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment for the proposed development which is included as **Appendix E**. The Due Diligence Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales and the Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural heritage in NSW.

As sections of the proposed work are in previously cleared landforms which contain property fences and cleared agricultural land, it could be considered that the proposed work is occurring in 'disturbed land'. However, the proposed works are not in areas where the land's surface has been changed in a clear and observable manner and as such the due diligence process must be applied.

In the regard, the search of the ABIMS on-line database identified that there are no previously recorded sites within the study area and the closest recorded site is a culturally modified tree (AHIMS# 20-5-0080) located 5.6 km northeast of the site. In addition, the development area is located over 200 m from the nearest waterway and no other landscape features with identified archaeological potential are present within the site.

The application of the due diligence process to the proposed development resulted in OzArk concluding that while the proposed works will have an impact on the ground surface, however, no Aboriginal objects or intact archaeological deposits are likely to be harmed. Accordingly, an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit application is not necessary, and development may proceed with caution.

6.2.1 Management and Mitigation Measures

Regardless of the above findings the following mitigation and management measures proposed to minimise the risks of any residual impacts to cultural heritage:

- The proposed work may proceed at the study area without further archaeological investigation.
- All land and ground disturbance activities must be confined to within the study area, as this will eliminate the risk of harm to Aboriginal objects that may be in adjacent landforms. Should the parameters of the proposal extend beyond the assessed areas, then further archaeological assessment may be required.
- This assessment has concluded that there is a low likelihood that the proposed work will adversely harm Aboriginal cultural heritage items or sites. If during works, however, Aboriginal artefacts or skeletal material are noted, all work should cease and the procedures in the Unanticipated Finds Protocol (Appendix 2 of the Due Diligence Assessment) should be followed.
- Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts (Appendix 3 of the Due Diligence Assessment) and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the *National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974* and the contents of the Unanticipated Finds Protocol.
- The information presented here meets the requirements of the Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales. It should be retained as shelf documentation for five years as it may be used to support a defence against prosecution in the event of unanticipated harm to Aboriginal objects.

6.3 CONTAMINATION

A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Database has confirmed that the site is not listed as a contaminated land. In addition, the site has been historically cleared and has been used for cropping, and grazing activities. Based on historic aerial photography, the impact areas associated with the development are located on land that has been in agricultural production since at least 1960 and have not been used of any industrial or rural industry purposes which would indicate a risk of contamination. Accordingly, the site is expected to be of minimal risk to contamination.

6.4 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

A Stormwater Management Strategy has been prepared by Hanlons Consulting and is included as **Appendix F.** This report describes the principles and operation of the proposed stormwater system as well as the primary components of the drainage system.

The increase in impervious areas and alteration of the natural topography, due to land development, will increase and concentrate stormwater flows. This has the potential to impact on flow regimes and cause erosion of the natural downstream drainage network and associated waterways.

To avoid any adverse impact on the downstream drainage systems, the site's stormwater management system must be designed to ensure the safe conveyance of flows throughout the site and within the capacity of the downstream drainage systems in a healthy environmental state for Ecological Sustainable Development.

All design considerations have been based on current design guidelines, Australian Standards and *TRC Engineering Design Minimum Standards (EDMS)* and *TRC Construction Specifications*.

6.4.1 Stormwater Quantity management

The increase in impervious areas and alteration of the natural topography, due to land development, will increase and concentrate stormwater flows. This has the potential to impact on flow regimes and cause erosion of the natural downstream drainage network and associated waterways.

Accordingly, stormwater management for the farm utilises inter-shed drains and external collection drains that will convey flows to the proposed discharge points. As shown in Figure 20, stormwater flows around the poultry farm will be collected via a series of swales running between and then directed through a network of stormwater pits, pipes, and open channels to the open swale drains along either side of the farm. The drains will be fitted with level spreaders to discharge stormwater as overland flows to the paddocks located on low side of the farm. The design features of the proposed drains are outlined in Table 11.

Table 11: Open Chanel Features

CHANNEL TYPE	DESIGN FEATURE
Inter-shed drains	• Trapezoidal cross section; • 2.5m wide; • 1:6 batters; • Longitudinal grade of 0.5% to 1%; • Grass lined with suitable rock armouring; and • Discharge to the external collector drain via 450mm diameter pipe culvert and headwall.
External drains	• Trapezoidal cross section; • 3.5m wide; • 1:3 batters; • Grass lined with suitable rock armouring; and • Discharge to the proposed onsite drainage lines.

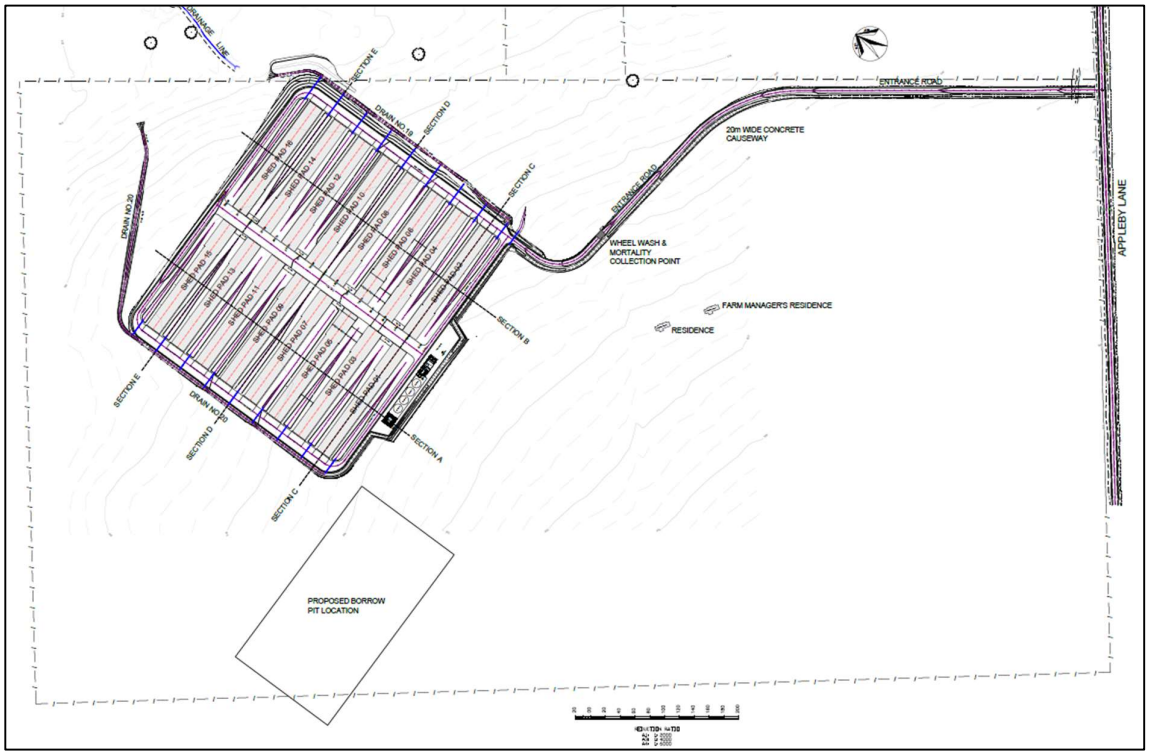

Figure 20: Stormwater Management Plan (Hanlons Consulting, 2024)

The stormwater was modelled using the DRAINS stormwater modelling package to ensure that there was no worsening of post development flows compared to existing conditions. In this regard, the site was modelled for the 1 EY, 0.2EY, 10% AEP, 5% AEP & 1% AEP design storms to cover both the minor and major events. The results show that inter-shed drains function as individual detention structures and result in an overall reduction of the developed flows without the need for a large detention basin.

6.4.2 Stormwater Quality Management

All sheds are constructed on an elevated pad and concrete slab and surrounded by a waterproof blockwork at the base of the insulated panel wall. As such internal shed areas are entirely separated from interaction with stormwater or roof water. The water is therefore expected to be of high quality, similar to the quality of water runoff from the surrounding area, and as such not capable of generating issues of water contamination in waterways or water dependent ecosystems.

Rainfall runoff from the shed roofs and from some of the surrounding external surfaces will be directed into the grassed swales running between the sheds and discharged into the external drainage channel surrounding the farm. A small amount of washdown water associated with the external washing of sheds with a high-pressure hose is also generated at the end of each batch and will run into the swales.

The grassed swales have a low grade to maximise opportunities for infiltration and stormwater treatment for run-off water entering the swale. Following the initial bulk earthworks, additional excavation of the swale drains will be undertaken to allow approximately 100 mm of topsoil to be placed within the swales to facilitate growth of grass cover and enhance infiltration.

The typical annual pollutant load removal efficiencies for vegetated swales according to *Australian Runoff Quality* (Engineers Australia 2006) are:

- Total suspended solids – 60 to 80% removal.
- Total nitrogen – 25 to 40% removal.
- Total phosphorus – 30 to 50% removal.

As such, the proposed swales between the sheds and as well as the external drainage channel surrounding the farm are expected to provide sufficient water quality treatment to the potential pollutant loads associate with farm operations. In addition, it is also important to note that the farm is to be constructed on historically used for cropping activities (e.g. lucerne production) with the associated ploughing and fertilizer use. Accordingly, the water quality of stormwater discharged from the farm, is expected to be comparable or better run existing overland flow from the site.

Given the controlled environment in which the proposed poultry development will operate, along with the approval and licensing conditions it will need to comply with, the proposed poultry farm will pose a minimal risk with respect to stormwater quality.

It is therefore considered that the potential for impacts from the farm on groundwater and surface water is very low. The proposed development poses a low risk to local water resources and negligible impacts are expected.

6.4.3 Management Measures

In spite of the low risk to downstream water quality, the following standard management and mitigation measure are proposed to further minimise risks.

During Construction

- Implementation of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan to limit discharge of sediment into water courses.
- Overland flows upslope will be diverted around areas of disturbance.
- Minimise clearing of ground covers to construction areas only.
- Construction managers are required to regular inspect and maintain erosion and sediment control will be implemented to ensure the continued integrity of the temporary erosion and sediment control structures.

Development Design

- The poultry sheds will be constructed on a concrete slab with a poured solid concrete wall to ensure no interaction of external water movement (roof water and stormwater).
- Shed roof will be constructed with an overhang to ensure roof water is separated from the internal bird accommodation areas.
- Stormwater runoff over the sheds is collected within grass swales running lengthwise each of the building pads and discharged into the retention basin on site.
- Stormwater discharge points will be constructed of loose packed rock to slow velocities, disperse water and minimise the risk of erosion at the outlet.

Operation, Monitoring and Maintenance

- There will not be any on-site stockpiling of used bedding material, manure or waste materials on site.
- At the end of each production cycle, bedding material will be promptly removed from the sheds, loaded trucks and transported off-site in covered trucks for disposal.
- Dead birds will be collected from the sheds on a daily basis and stored in on-site freezers prior to removal off-site.
- The poultry sheds will be cleaned and sanitised at the end of each production cycle using high pressure gurney sprays to minimise water use and are left to dry before new bedding is introduced for a new batch of birds.
- The waste water generated by the staff amenities and caretakers' dwellings will be appropriately treated by a standard septic system in accordance with the requirements of Council.

Chemical Use

- The operation will require limited chemical use, with appropriate systems in place for storage and disposal.
- All chemical use within the proposed poultry development will be undertaken in full compliance with the Pesticides Act 1999.
- Where appropriate, chemicals used within the proposed poultry development will be approved by the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority as safe and fit for that particular use.

6.5 AIR QUALITY

An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Kate Stone Environmental Pty Ltd (Katestone) to assess the potential impact of the development in terms of odour and dust. This assessment is included as **Appendix H**.

6.5.1 Modelling Methodology

In NSW, air quality impact assessments of new activities or amendments to existing activities are carried out in accordance with the Approved Methods for Modelling, which lists the statutory methods for modelling and assessing emissions of air pollutants from stationary sources. The Approved Methods for Modelling is subordinate legislation under Part 4 of the Clean Air Regulation.

The Approved Methods for Modelling lists the statutory methods for modelling and assessing emissions of air pollutants from major projects in NSW. The Approved Methods for Modelling is referred to in:

- Conditions attached to statutory instruments including environmental assessment requirements under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act)
- Part 5: Air Impurities Emitted from Activities and Plant in the Clean Air Regulation.

These methods cover various aspects such as emissions inventory data, meteorological data, dispersion modelling, and criteria for assessing the impact of air pollutants including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and odorous pollutants.

From the Approved Methods of Modelling, the specific approach for odour impact assessment considers population density and sensitivity to odours within the community. Based on this assessment the Predicted ground-level concentrations of odour have been compared to the odour impact assessment criterion of 5 OU (99th percentile, nose-response-time average). This criterion is suitable given the number of isolated farmhouses and small isolated communities (< 3 houses) in the vicinity of the proposed Silverweir development.

Along with the modelling methodology, the TAPM (version 4.0.5) and CALMET (version 6.5.0) were utilised to generate the predicted impact levels based on the odour impact criteria and assumptions.

6.5.2 Sensitive Receptors and Surrounding Environment

Sensitive receptors (primarily residential dwelling) closest to the proposed farm have been identified and are shown in ***Figure 21***. Additionally, the study acknowledges the presence of two existing poultry farms nearby: Gidley and Taradale, situated approximately 3.0 km east and 2.0 km northeast and takes cumulative emissions into account.

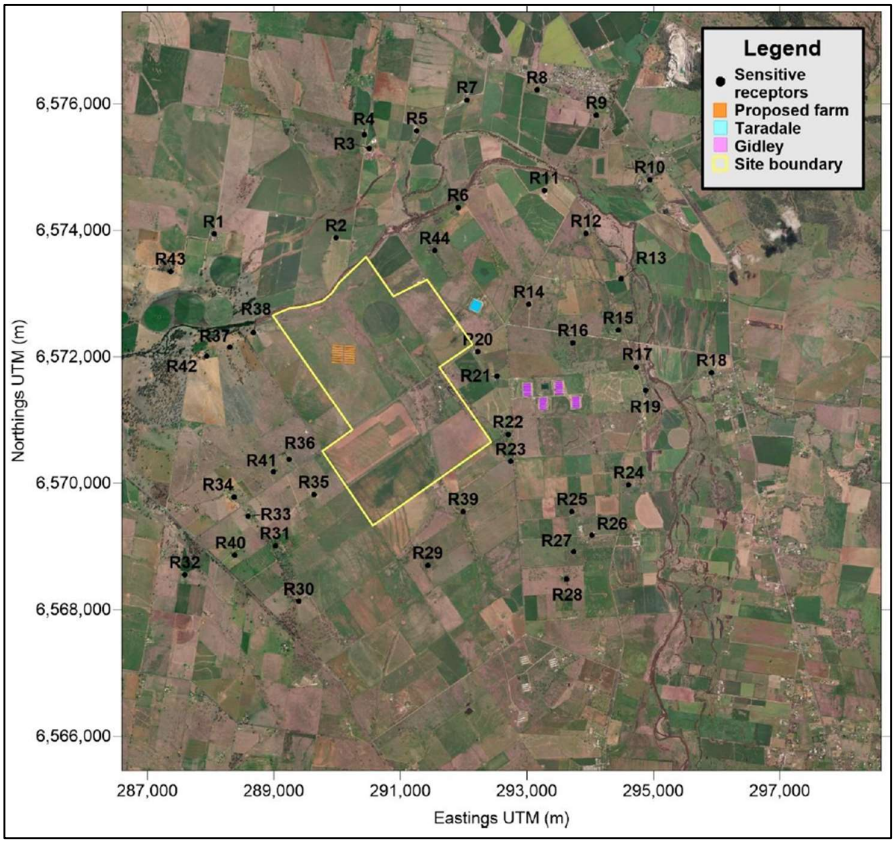

Figure 21: Sensitive Receptors (Katestone, 2024)

6.5.3 Emission Sources and Assumptions

The assumptions and parameters used to determine the odour emission rates from the proposed and existing poultry farms are associated with the operations and function each farm. These include:

- Bird numbers.
- Bird stocking density (bird age, bird mass, shed dimensions).
- Ventilation rate (function of bird age and ambient temperature).
- Shed management practices.

Emissions have been estimated using methods outlined in the AgriFutures guideline, commonly used in NSW and throughout Australia for estimating emissions from poultry farms. The assumption for cumulative impacts takes into account the nearby poultry farms as outlined in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Nearby Poultry Farm Parameters

FARM	GIDLEY	TARADALE
Number of Sheds	24	5
Total Bird Numbers	567,900	225,000
Maximum ventilation air flow Rate	152.9m3/s (550,368m3/hour)	155.1m3/s (558,360m3/hour)

It is important to note that the operation of these farms has changed significantly since the previous approval in 2010. In response to improvements in animal welfare requirements, the introduction of contractual obligations to improved shed management and a corresponding reduction in bird numbers, the odour emission associated with the existing farms has reduced. In particular, the maximum bird population at the Gidley Farm has reduced from 728,000 Birds to 567,9000, while the maximum population at Taradale has also reduced from 250,000 to 225,000 Birds.

The k-factor is a scaling factor used to account for the variation in odour emission rates between farms based on design and management practices. The higher the k-factor the greater the odour emission rate from the poultry shed.

A k-factor of 2.2 was assumed for all existing sheds included in the modelling assessment for conservatism. For the proposed sheds, results have been presented at both a k-factor of 2.2 and at a k-factor of 1.9. This is in accordance with the AgriFutures guideline, which states: *"It is recommended that when modelling a 'greenfield' site that will be operated to best management practice, a K-factor of no less than 1.9 should be used, as it represents the most recent test data from new farms"*

6.5.4 Air Quality Assessment Results

Dispersion modelling was carried out using the regulatory dispersion model CALPUFF, incorporating five years of meteorological data (2019-2023). Ground-level concentrations of odour and dust from the proposed Silverweir development were predicted at nearby sensitive receptors and across a Cartesian grid of receptors. The cumulative assessment included background odour emissions from the Taradale and Gidley farms.

6.5.4.1 Odour

The odour impact assessment results were compared against the relevant odour impact assessment criterion (5 OU (99th percentile, nose-response-time average), specified in the Approved Methods for Modelling. The findings are as follows:

- For the proposed 16-shed Silverweir development with a k-factor of 2.2, the predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in all five model years.
- For the proposed 16-shed Silverweir development with a k-factor of 1.9, the predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in all five model years.
- For the cumulative impacts of the Silverweir development and the existing Taradale and Gidley farms with a k-factor of 2.2 for all farms:
  - The predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in the model years 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2023.
  - In 2021, predicted odour concentrations exceed the criterion at one sensitive receptor (R38).
- For the cumulative impacts of the Silverweir development with a k-factor of 1.9 and the existing Taradale and Gidley farms with a k-factor of 2.2, the predicted ground-level odour concentrations meet the assessment criterion at all sensitive receptors in all five model years.

6.5.4.2 Dust

The dust impact assessment results were compared against the PM2.5 and PM10 criteria specified in the Approved Methods for Modelling. The findings are as follows:

- Predicted 24-hour and annual average ground-level concentrations of PM2.5 from the Silverweir development alone are at most 5.8% and 1.2% of the relevant criteria, respectively.
- Predicted 24-hour and annual average ground-level concentrations of PM10 from the Silverweir development alone are at most 11.6% and 1.5% of the relevant criteria, respectively.
- A contemporaneous assessment combining modelled results of the Silverweir development with the existing Gidley and Taradale farms and observed ambient dust levels showed an additional exceedance day at one sensitive receptor for PM2.5 in 2019. The Silverweir development's contribution on this day was 0.07 $\mu g/m^3$. The primary cause of the exceedance was an elevated background level, likely due to bushfire smoke.

The assessment has shown that the proposed Silverweir development is unlikely to cause adverse odour and dust impacts.

6.5.4.3 Vegetated Buffers

While not included in the modelling or required to achieve compliance, the Applicant is proposing to install a landscape buffer around the proposed farm. In this regard, research has shown that dust concentrations from livestock operations can be reduced by 35% to 65% using vegetative buffers (Laird, 1997; Thernelius, 1997; Malone, et al., 2006; Malone, et al., 2008). As a specific example, Malone *et. al.* (2006; 2008) showed an average dust reduction over three years of 56%. This was found to be associated with the dust impacting on the trees and depositing out.

Concerning vegetation and odour, studies have also shown reductions in the order of 60% (Parker, et al., 2012) downwind of a vegetative barrier at a pig farm. Patterson et. al. (2009) reported a 34% odour reduction downwind of an egg layer farm with a four-row vegetative planting, and 46-54% reductions downwind of a five-row vegetative barrier. Therefore, the proposed vegetative buffer is expected to further reduce the potential for odour impacts, compared to the modelled outcomes.

At farms in Australia, a standard vegetative buffer would often be at least 10 metres wide, with a variety of species achieving a 50% porosity base to crown, to a final height of at least six metres. Such a buffer would be wider and denser than the buffers studied in the literature, and such would likely achieve more consistent and higher rates of reduction.

6.5.5 Management and Mitigation Measures

The following best practice odour and dust management measures have been recommended and will be adopted for the modified poultry farm.

Odour

- Vegetation buffers should be planted and maintained around the sheds as soon as practicable following construction. Vegetation buffers reduce the magnitude and frequency of any adverse air quality impacts by effectively slowing and filtering air movement, which reduces dust impacts via dust deposition and also assists in odour dispersion.
- The poultry sheds will be tunnel-ventilated which allow good control over internal moisture levels and also promote optimum growing conditions and bird health. The increased airflow and improved feed conversion in modern tunnel-vented sheds assists in the maintenance of the bedding material within the optimal moisture range.
- The poultry sheds will be fully enclosed, have wide eaves and be surrounded by concrete bund walls to prevent rainwater entering the sheds and to allow for the controlled discharge of wash down water during cleaning.

These measures will reduce the level of moisture within the poultry sheds associated with rainfall, which in turn helps keep litter moisture low, which in turn reduces the risk of abnormal odour emissions.

- The poultry sheds will be fitted with nipple drinkers with drip cups to minimise water spillage and prevent elevated moisture levels in the litter.
- The feed silos will be fully enclosed to both prevent the entry of rainwater, with wet feed also identified as a potential odour source and minimise emissions of dust/particulate matter when loading and unloading.
- The maximum stocking density will not exceed the manual specifications.
- Regular monitoring and maintenance of the tunnel ventilation systems and bird drinkers will be undertaken to avoid spillage, leaks, lowering of efficiency of fans and uneven distribution.
- Stocking densities and bird health within each of the poultry sheds will be regularly checked and, if necessary, appropriate corrective measures will be implemented.
- Daily monitoring and maintenance of the bedding material will occur to identify, remove and replace any caked material beneath drinking lines and/or areas with excessive moisture content.
- Poultry litter will be promptly removed from the sheds and transported off-site in covered trucks at the end of each production cycle during the clean-out phase. Wherever possible the handling of the material will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions, such as times of cold air drainage during early morning or at night and during strong winds. The shed ventilation systems will not be used during litter removal.
- Poultry litter will not be stockpiled or spread within the site.
- Dead birds will be collected from the sheds on a daily basis and stored in on-site chillers before removal from site.
- The insides of the poultry sheds and the surrounds will be maintained at all times to ensure a clean and sanitary environment.
- Shed access points will remain closed at all times other than for allowing access to the sheds.
- Where possible, activities that may increase odour emissions (for example, bedding material replacement) will be undertaken during daytime hours.

Particulate Matter

- Vegetation buffers should be planted be planted and maintained around the new PPUs as soon as practicable following construction. Vegetative buffers reduce the magnitude and frequency of any adverse air quality impacts by effectively slowing and filtering air movement, which enhances dust deposition which reduces the movement of dust offsite.
- The feed silos will be fully enclosed to minimise emissions of particulate matter when loading/unloading.
- The poultry sheds will be tunnel-ventilated which allow good control over internal moisture levels and also promote optimum growing conditions and bird health. The increased airflow and improved feed conversion in modern tunnel-vented sheds assists in the maintenance of the bedding material within the optimal moisture range.
- Vehicles will not exceed a general speed limit of 40 km/hr within the site and should be confined, where possible, to the internal access roads.
- Internal access roads will be appropriately constructed and maintained to minimise dust emissions.
- The poultry shed ventilation systems will be maintained to ensure air movement is at design levels.
- The poultry sheds will be thoroughly cleaned between batches, with a focus on the fan end of the sheds.
- The generators are mounted in covered enclosures with adequate shade and ventilation with vertical air discharge

- Where possible, the handling of bedding material and litter will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions and shed ventilation systems will not be used during little removal.
- Poultry litter will be promptly transported off-site in covered trucks at the end of each production cycle.

6.6 NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by SoundIN to assess the potential noise impacts of the proposed development against the relevant acoustic criteria and is included as **Appendix I**. A summary of the acoustic assessment is provided below.

6.6.1 Existing Acoustic Environment

The nearest residential receivers are shown in ***Figure 22***. Noise monitoring has not been undertaken for the purpose of this assessment. Instead, a conservative approach has been taken whereby the minimum daytime RBL value of 35 dBA, as recommended in the Noise Policy for Industry (NPfI), has been adopted for the existing background levels.

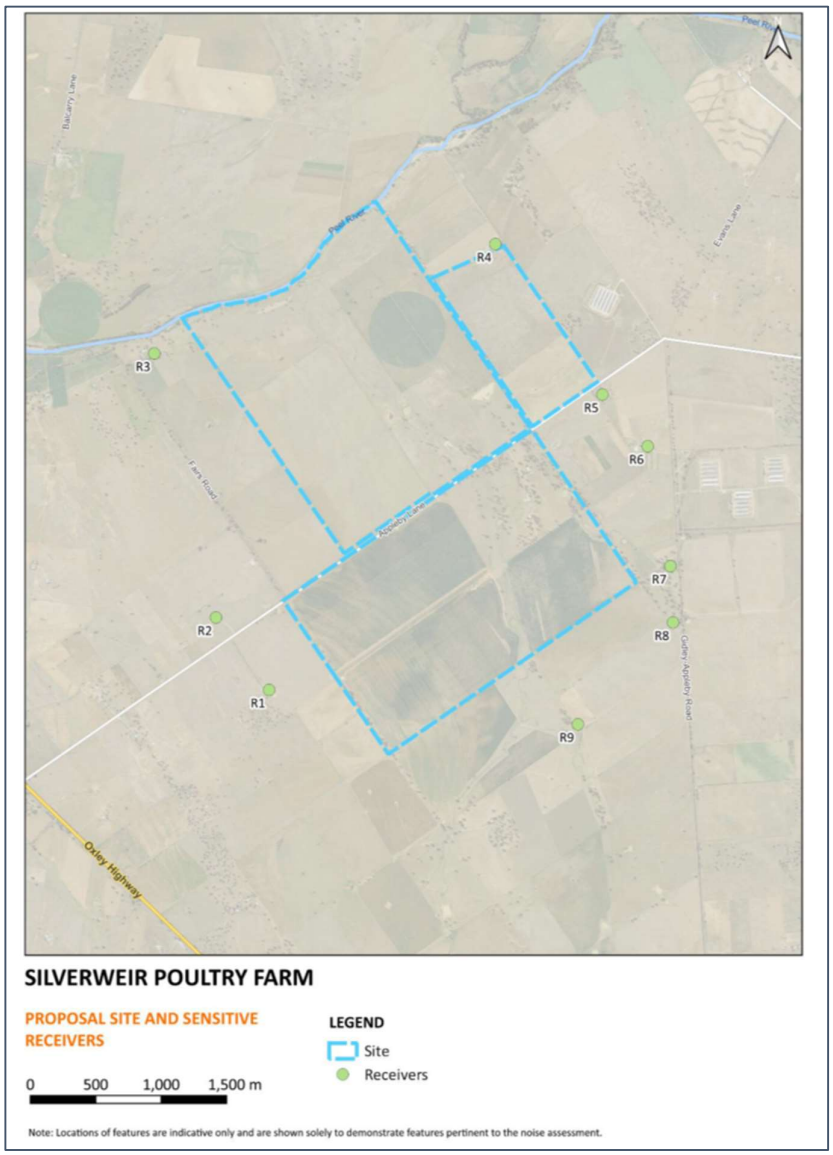

Figure 22: Sensitive Receptors (SoundIN, 2024)

6.6.2 Construction Noise

Construction noise emissions from the Proposal have been modelled using SoundPLAN v8.2. The selected noise calculation method is International Standard ISO 9613-2:1996 *Acoustics – Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors – Part 2: General Method of Calculation* (ISO 9613-2).

Equipment sound levels have been determined from Transport for NSW's Construction Noise Estimator and the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Noise Database for Prediction of Noise on Construction and Open Sites.

The predicted $L_{Aeq,15min}$ noise levels at sensitive receivers during construction as modelled are presented in Table 13. The results indicate that construction noise levels are predicted to comply with the Noise Management Level (NML) at all receivers.

Table 13: Predicted Construction Noise Levels at Sensitive Receptors

Predicted Construction Noise Levels Receiver	Predicted Construction $_{LAeq,15min}$ Noise Levels (dBA)			NML	Exceedance (dBA)
	Earthworks	Concreting	Assembly and Fit out		
R1	32	29	27	45	-
R2	34	31	29	45	-
R3	36	33	31	45	-
R4	36	33	31	45	-
R5	35	31	29	45	-
R6	33	28	26	45	-
R7	29	25	23	45	-
R8	28	22	20	45	-
R9	28	22	20	45	-

6.6.3 Operational Noise

Operational noise emissions from the Proposal have been modelled using SoundPLAN v8.2, using the CONCAWE prediction algorithm. The CONCAWE noise propagation model is used around the world and is widely accepted as an appropriate model for predicting noise over significant distances. Factors addressed in the noise modelling are:

- Equipment noise level emissions and locations
- Shielding from structures
- Noise attenuation due to geometric spreading
- Meteorological conditions
- Ground absorption
- Atmospheric absorption.

Significant continuous noise sources associated with the operation of the farm are as follows:

- Ventilation fans
- Trucks

- Forklifts
- Feed silo refill auger.

Up to 18 fans on each shed would operate to provide adequate ventilation and control temperatures within the sheds. These fans would be located on the outer end of each shed. Feed deliveries would occur during the daytime via truck and would also involve the use of an auger to fill the feed silo. Bird delivery and collection would occur at night, for bird welfare reasons, and would involve trucks and forklifts.

Sound power levels (SWL) for the noise sources identified above have been adopted from manufacturer data, information from the client and previous measurements conducted by SoundIN.

Based on the above operational noise sources and sound power levels and as shown in **Table 14**, the modelling undertaken shows that the predicted noise levels at all nearby receivers is in clear compliance with the relevant noise trigger levels at all times.

Table 14: Predicted LAeq,15min Noise Levels

	Predicted LAeq,15min noise level (dBA)						Predicted LAeq,15min noise level (dBA)			Complies
	Day		Evening		Night		Day	Evening	Night	
	Calm	NE	Calm	NE	Calm	NE				
R1	21	27	<20	25	20	26	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R2	24	30	23	29	23	29	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R3	29	35	28	34	28	34	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R4	25	31	25	31	25	31	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R5	24	30	24	30	24	30	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R6	22	28	21	27	21	27	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R7	<20	25	<20	24	<20	24	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R8	<20	24	<20	23	<20	23	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes
R9	<20	24	<20	23	<20	23	**40**	**35**	**35**	Yes

In addition, acoustic modelling the predicted nighttime LAmax noise levels at nearby residential receivers due to the operation of the proposed farm also complies with the relevant criteria at all nearby receivers and as such, is not expected to result in Sleep Disturbance at any nearby dwellings.

6.6.4 Road Noise

Road noise impacts associated with the Proposal have been assessed in accordance with the RNP. Predicted road noise levels associated with traffic generated by the Proposal comply with the RNP impact assessment criteria.

6.7 TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PSA Consulting Pty Ltd has carried out a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) for the proposed Silverweir Poultry Farm. This assessment is attached as **Appendix G**. The TIA reviews the existing traffic and conditions on the roads surrounding the site and assesses the potential impacts of the expected traffic generation on these roads.

6.7.1 Existing Traffic Volumes

The surrounding road network predominantly comprises B-Double routes and approved routes with specific travel conditions. Notably, B-Double routes are identified along Oxley Highway, Gidley Appleby Road, and Wallamore Road. Oxley Highway is identified as the primary route for vehicles traveling to and from the site due to its favourable accessibility for both northbound and southbound traffic. It is assumed that all heavy vehicles accessing the site will predominantly use Oxley Highway for their movements.

Traffic data, sourced from the Traffic Volume Viewer by Transport for NSW on January 18, 2024, about 1.1 km from the Oxley Highway / Appleby Lane intersection, encompasses both light and heavy vehicle classifications for both southbound and northbound directions as per ***Table 15***. A conservative estimate suggests that around 0.5% of traffic traveling in both directions enters and exits Appleby Lane, considering the limited existing development along this lane. Moreover, a decrease in traffic counts is observed south of Oxley Highway, approximately 9 km from the Oxley Highway / Appleby Lane intersection, indicating Oxley Highway's significance as a primary route for vehicles accessing Appleby Lane.

Table 15: Oxley Highway Traffic Volumes (Source: TfNSW)

	Oxley Highway	Light Vehicle	Heavy Vehicle
AM Peak	Northbound	345	87
	Southbound	320	167
PM Peak	Northbound	399	131
	Southbound	388	79

6.7.2 Proposed Development Traffic Generation

Table 16 provides a summary of traffic generation associated with the proposed farm. As shown, it is anticipated that the proposed poultry farm will generate an average of approximately 14 heavy vehicle trips per day (7 incoming / 7 outgoing) and 12 light vehicle trips (6 incoming / 6 outgoing) however some peak periods associated with bird collections, shed clean out and set up at the end of each cycle. While a majority of the heavy vehicles will typically occur during the day, bird collections does occur at night. During the night time collection, the heavy vehicles could be up to a maximum of 38 trips (19 incoming / 19 outgoing) on a peak collection night.

Table 16: Traffic Generation

GENERATION	VEHICLE TYPE	Trucks / Cycle	Trips / Cycle (Trucks x 2)	Trips / Year (5.2 Cycles)
HEAVY VEHICLES				
Chick Placement	Large Rigid	13	26	135
Bedding Material	B-Double	21	42	216
Feed Deliveries	B-Double	169	338	1758
Bird Collection	B-Double	151	302	1568
Mortality Collection	Small Rigid	50	100	520
Floor Litter Collection	B-Double	34	68	352
Gas Deliveries	Semi-Trailer	16	31	162
			906 / Cycle	**4711 / Year**
LIGHT VEHICLES				
Staff Vehicles	Farm Staff Cars	6 Cars / Day		**4380 / Year**

6.7.3 Site Access

The proposed poultry farm will gain access via a new driveway connection to Appleby Lane with a BAR / BAL formation. The site entrance will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Australian and Council Standards and can be conditioned accordingly.

As demonstrated in the desktop assessment, the site access is visible from the required sight distance position on Appleby Lane, with no major obstructions noted within the field of view from both the site access and required position along Appleby Lane.

6.7.4 Network Impact Assessment

A detailed impact assessment was not undertaken due to the traffic generated by the proposed development not anticipating adverse or significant impacts to the existing road network. The assessment demonstrated that no works are required at the Appleby Lane / Oxley Highway intersection as the existing Basic Left Turn treatment and Basic Right Turn treatment (BAR/BAL) is sufficient to cater for the development trip generation.

6.7.5 Car Parking and On-Site Manoeuvring

Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010 does not specify a parking rate for a Poultry Farm and as such, sufficient parking is to be provided to cater for staff and visitors on a first principles basis. In this regard, the farm will employ 6 full time staff (2 mangers + 4 staff) and is provide with 10 parking spaces. Accordingly, the sufficient parking is provided for staff and visitors to the site.

The design of the staff car parking area has been reviewed with regard to Australian Standard 2890.1 (2004). The design meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of that Standard with regard to the dimensions of the parking bays, aisles and driveway access road.

The internal layout of the poultry farm roadways was also assessed by PSA for suitability by considering the swept paths of the heavy vehicles expected to use the site. The proposed road layouts are satisfactory for manoeuvring of those vehicles. All swept path movements have been provided within the Traffic Impact Assessment (**Appendix G**).

6.8 VISUAL IMPACTS

6.8.1 Existing Landscape Character

The site is located on the slopes of the Peel River flood plain. The local topography is characterised by moderately undulating hills with open agricultural land, falling to the narrow alluvial floodplains of the Peel River. The terrain of the site and the immediate surrounding area is generally characterised as flat, with a gentle fall of approximately 20m from the southern to northern boundary (over ~2km) equating to a 1% slope.

The landscape typical of the site and immediate surrounds is characterised by cleared agricultural land, used for a combination of cropping and grazing. Under the Tamworth Regional Local Environment Plan (LEP) 2010, The Site (and most of the surrounding land) is categorised as RU1-Primary Production.

Rural dwellings and agricultural structures including sheds, irrigation infrastructure, and stockyards are interspersed across the landscape. The site is located approximately 2.0 and 2.6km west of the Taradale and Giddley Poultry Farms respectively. While the landscape has been largely cleared for extensive agriculture, remnant vegetation is present along drainage lines and planted vegetation is apparent surrounding rural dwellings.

The site is site is setback approximately 700m to Appleby Lane to the south and 800m to Fairs Road to the west. The nearest residential dwellings to the site are located approximately:

- 1.2 km to the west.
- 1.5 km to the south west.
- 1.7 km to the north east.
- 1.9 km to the east.

6.8.2 Visual Impact

As noted above the subject site and surrounding area is characterised as a productive rural area comprised of cropping, grazing, and poultry framing. The subject site and proposed broiler farm will be in keeping with the rural nature of the local area. The balance of the property is to be retained for cropping and grazing as per the current situation.

The proposed farm is setback 700m to Appleby Lane to the south and 800m to Fairs Road to the west. As a result of these setbacks, the existing roadside vegetation (particularly along Fairs Road), the proposed landscape planting, and the low profile of the proposed sheds, the development is not expected to have a significant visual impact when viewed from the public road network.

Similarly, the nearest rural dwelling is located approximately 1,2km to the west of proposed farm and as such the potential visually impact is expected to significant reduced due to the distance, intervening remnant vegetation, and the planted landscape buffers.

6.8.3 Screening Vegetation

As noted in Section 3.3.5, the proposed development includes screen planning in a 3 line configuration supporting a mix of shrubs and around the farm to soften potential views of the farm from the nearest sensitive receptors public roads and other vantage points. Similar, planting has been previously implemented at Baiada's Bowlers Lane broiler farms. As shown in ***Figure 23*** and ***Figure 24***, once established, the buffer planting provides effective screening of the poultry farm, even at close vantage points.

Figure 23: Existing Buffer Planting at Bowlers Lane (Nearmap, 2024)

Figure 24: Existing Buffer Planting - viewed from Bowlers Lane (Google Maps, 2024)

6.8.4 Shed Colours and Glare

The shed colours are chosen in response consideration of thermal performance of materials and visual impacts. In this regard, lighter colours have best thermal performance in terms of absorbing less heat and minimising the need for additional cooling during summer months. In addition, the use of lighter colours with the New England Region is generally more consistent with the colours of the surrounding landscape, compared to darker colours that stand out during the dryer months. Accordingly, the proposed sheds and ancillary building are to be constructed with surfmist colourbond roofs and walls.

It is considered the location of the farm, the separation distances to neighbouring residential dwellings, and the proposed screening vegetation, will minimise the risk of glare or reflectivity impacts. For comparative purposes, a view of the existing Taradale Farm which is setback only 400m from Appleby Lane (compared to 700m for the proposed farm is provided in ***Figure 25*** below.

With respect to roof glare, the low height of the sheds (maximum of 4.8m) and low pitch of the roof significantly reduces the risk of solar reflection toward neighbouring properties. In addition, and in response to feedback received during the consultation phase, the Applicant has proposed to use a colourbond (surfmist) roof to reduce the risk of glare from a standard metallic products.

Figure 25: Photo of Taradale Farm from Appleby Lane (Google Maps, 2024)

6.9 CHEMICAL USE AND STORAGE

6.9.1 Screening Assessment

The only potentially hazardous of dangerous chemicals and fuels that will be used at the farm will be:

- LPG used for heating of sheds.
- Diesel Fuel used to run the back-up generators in the event of power supply failure.
- Water treatment chemicals including:
    - Sodium hypochlorite (10-30%).
    - Chlorine dioxide (water supply treatment).
- Sanitation products for cleaning of the poultry sheds at the end of production cycle (e.g. Microgard 755N) and wheel wash facilities.
- Sanitation products for staff entering and existing the sheds (handwashing and footbaths (e.g. Micro-4).

Other commercially available products may also be used on the farm for maintenance, or by cleaning crews including:

- Pest control products (rodent baits).
- Weed control products (e.g. Roundup).
- Commercial Degreasers and Cleaners (e.g. Total Kleen, Cling & Clean, Foam Clean S) for shed washdowns.

All chemicals used on the site will be stored in appropriately secured, sealed and bunded facilities in accordance with the relevant Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). LPG and diesel are also separated from the chemical store.

A Screening Assessment of the storage of dangerous goods on the site has been undertaken by Lote Consulting and is included in **Appendix K**. As shown in **Table 17**, the quantities of diesel, water treatment chemicals and sanitisers are minor quantities well below the respective screening thresholds in "Applying SEPP33," a guideline published by the Department of Planning NSW. and are not considered to pose a hazard risk. As the storage of LPG exceeds the specified threshold, a Preliminary Hazard Assessment for LPG is required.

Table 17: Dangerous Goods Storage Quantities

STORAGE AREA	DG CLASS	PACKING GROUP	MAX QTY	SEPP 33 GUIDELINE SCREENING THRESHOLD
LPG Tank	2.1	N/A	30 T	10 tonne
Low Flash Point Diesel Fuel Tank	3	III	4,000 L (3.33 Tonnes)	N/A where < 5T
Water Treatment Chemicals	8	II & III	600 L	5T (PGII) 25T (PGII)
Sanitiser Chemicals	9	III	40L	N/A

In addition to the storage of Dangerous Goods, the SEPP also requires a review of their transportation to the site. As outlined in the Screening Assessment, the proposed farm will require 81 deliveries of LPG per annum which is substantially less than the threshold of 500 movements. As such, Lote Consulting concludes that the policy for transportation of dangerous goods does not apply in this instance.

6.9.2 Preliminary Hazard Assessment

The proposed poultry farms require Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in order to provide heating for the birds during the cooler months. LPG gas is stored within a 30T, above ground tank to be installed on the farm. LPG is described as a Dangerous Good and as such, Chapter 3 of the *SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* applies. As the storage volume exceeds the screening threshold in Applying SEPP33," a guideline published by the Department of Planning NSW, Lote Consulting was engaged to prepare a Preliminary Hazard Assessment (PHA) concerning the storage of LPG on the site.

As outlined above, an updated PHA has been prepared based on the proposed storage of LPG on the poultry farm in accordance with the Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory paper (HIPAP) No. 4(2) and No. 6(3) and is included as **Appendix L**. Based on the identified hazards, scenarios where postulated that may result in an incident with potential for offsite impacts. Postulated scenarios were discussed qualitatively and any scenario that would not impact offsite were eliminated from further assessment.

Based on the analysis conducted, it is concluded that the risk at the site boundary will not exceed the acceptable risk criteria and as such, the site would only be classified as potentially hazardous development. Regardless of this finding, a series of risk mitigation and management measures is proposed to manage on-site risks:

- The Dangerous Goods requirements of the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 shall be complied with (i.e. preparation of risk assessments, registers, notifications, etc.).
- Compliance with LPG Standard AS 1596:2014 for the storage and handling of LP Gas is to be maintained.
- The following safety measures shall be in place:
    - Non-return valves on both the tank and LPG tanker;
    - Excess flow valves on the LPG tanker;
    - Earthing connections; and
    - Ignition source control measures.
- The following safeguards are to be implemented
    - LPG facilities to be designed to comply with AS/NZS 1596:2014 (11) and will be installed by an experienced LPG facility supply company.
    - Ignition source control per AS/NZS 60079.14:2022 (9) including earthing to prevent static sparks.
    - Hoses tested annually as per AS/NZS 1596:2014 and the ADG (7).
- Preparation of an Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Services Information Package in accordance with HIPAP No. 1.
- The LPG storages shall be subject to hazardous area classification in accordance with AS/NZS 60079 series of standards (8).
- A hazardous area verification dossier shall be prepared in accordance with AS/NZS 60079.14:2022 (9).

6.10 BUSHFIRE ASSESSMENT

The site is located on land that is mapped by the RFS as bush fire prone land. *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP) applies to all DAs on bush fire prone land. As required by Section 1.4 of the PBP, Firebird ecoSultants Pty Ltd has been engaged to prepare a Bush Fire Assessment Report (BFAR) to address the requirements that are applicable to the proposed. A Copy of this report in Included as **Appendix J**.

6.10.1 Asset Protection Zones

Using the prescribed methodology, Asset Protection Zones (APZ) have been determined for each component of the development based on Table A1.12.3 of PBP. As shown in ***Figure 26***, the calculated APZ that will be applied to the development are 10m for the proposed Poultry Sheds and 50m for the Managers Residences. With the APZ in place, the worst case Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) has been determined for the proposed buildings using Table A1.12.6 of the PBP. Both the proposed sheds and residences comply with the PBP with the BAL rating of BAL-Low identified for the manager residences.

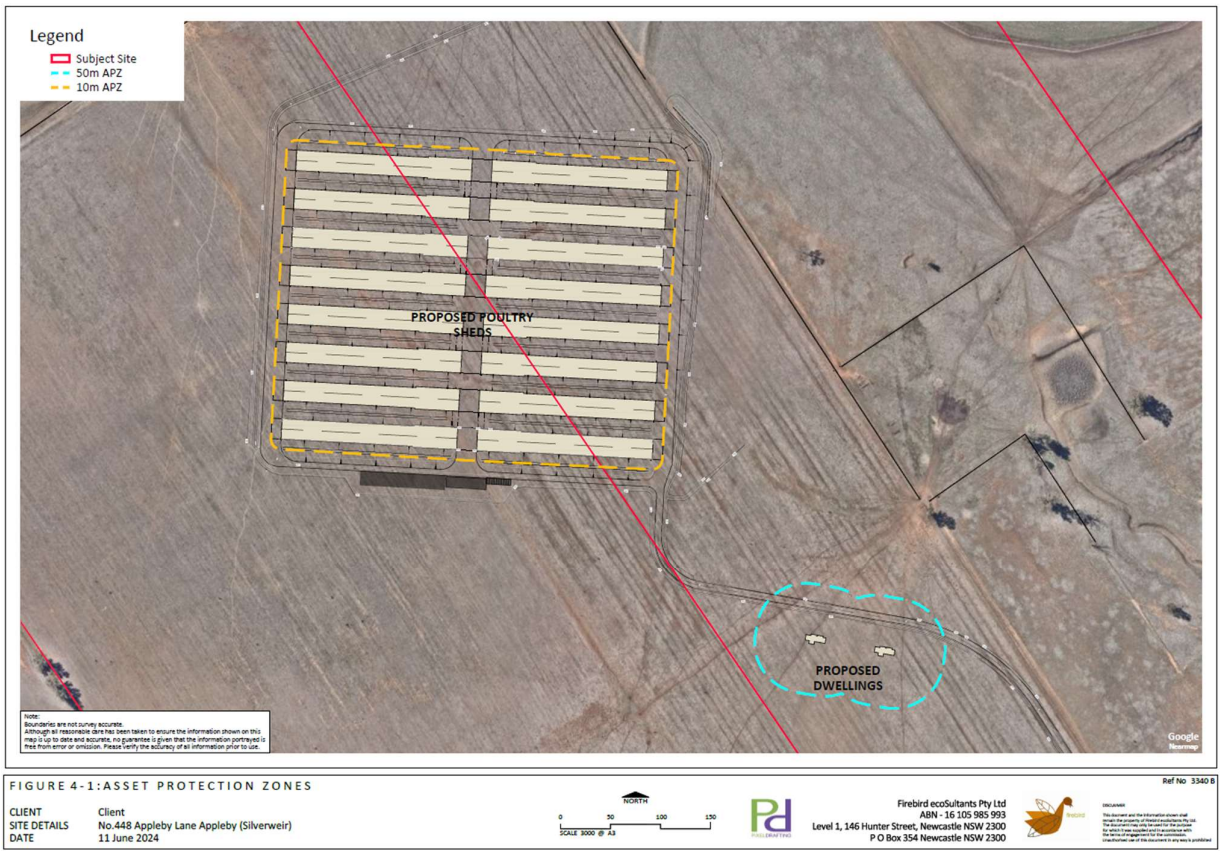

Figure 26: Asset Protection Zone (Firebird ecoSultants Pty Ltd, 2024)

6.10.2 Emergency Access

The site will be accessed via an entrance connecting to Appleby Lane. The entrance road will service access to the poultry sheds and residential dwellings and will comply with the following in accordance with Table 7.4a in PBP 2019 for property access:

- All-weather, two-wheel drive roads.
- Road surfaces and bridges/causeways supporting fully loaded firefighting vehicles (up to 23 tonnes).
- Suitable access for fire appliances to within 4 meters of a static water supply if no reticulated supply is available.
- At least one alternative access road for dwellings more than 200 meters from a public through road.

Where compliance with the above cannot be achieved, additional requirements include:

- Minimum 4m carriageway width.
- Passing bays every 200m in forest/woodland/heath areas.
- 4m vertical clearance from overhanging obstructions.
- Suitable turning areas as per Appendix 3.
- Minimum inner curve radius of 6m, minimal curves, 6m spacing between inner and outer curves.
- Crossfall not exceeding 10 degrees.
- Maximum grades: 15 degrees for sealed roads, 10 degrees for unsealed roads.
- Formalized access for developments with more than three dwellings by road dedication, not right of way.

Given that the proposed property access road complies with the above, it will ensure that appropriate operational access and egress is available for emergency services and occupants internally and to access the public road system.

6.10.3 Emergency and Evacuation

PBP 2019 Section 8.3 mandates suitable emergency and evacuation arrangements. The proposed poultry farm, managing up to 960,000 birds, will have 2 on-site managers, 4 full-time workers, and occasional contract staff. The road network, exceeding PBP 2019 requirements, provides defensible space for firefighting and limits fire spread. This network connects directly to the public road, facilitating safe evacuation if necessary. Bird evacuation is not feasible, but the bushfire protection measures (defensible space and building construction) aim to protect both the structural assets and birds. On-site water supplies would be used for firefighting to protect occupants and the birds during a fire.

6.10.4 Water Supply and Utilities

The poultry broiler sheds are classified as 'Other Development' and must meet the objectives of Chapter 1 in PBP 2019 to ensure adequate utility services for firefighters. The proposal includes water tanks for the sheds and staff amenities.

The manager's residences are classified as 'Infill Development' and must meet Chapter 7 objectives, including providing a 20,000L static water supply for firefighting if no reticulated supply is available. The water supply must comply with several requirements:

- A 65mm Storz outlet with a ball valve located away from the structure.
- Metal ball valve and pipes adequate for water flow.
- Consistent bore size for supply pipes from tank to ball valve.
- 200mm access hole for underground tanks.
- Hardened ground surface for truck access within 4m.
- Above-ground tanks made of concrete or metal.
- Non-combustible or fire-resistant material for raised tank stands.
- Unobstructed access at all times.
- Clear marking for underground tanks.
- Adequate shielding for tanks on the hazard side of a building.
- All external exposed water pipes and fittings made of metal.
- Minimum 5hp or 3kW petrol/diesel-powered pumps, shielded against bush fire attack.
- Fire hose reels constructed and installed according to AS/NZS 1221:1997 and AS 2441:2005.

6.10.5 Conclusion

The assessment concludes that, on completion, the proposed development will ensure that the development is located in an area that has an acceptable bushfire hazard level (i.e. ≤BAL-LOW), and with the implementation of the recommendations, is considered to be appropriately protected from bushfire and complies with the requirements of PBP.

6.11 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management is critical to the operation of an efficient poultry farm. As on similar sites, the applicant will adopt measures to ensure that all waste generated from activities on the site are reused and recycled where practical or otherwise managed and disposed of in a manner that will not cause environmental harm. Importantly, no on-site stockpiling or disposal of waste materials is proposed as part of this development.

Typically, broiler farms generate little waste that cannot be recycled or beneficially re-used. Potential waste streams are identified below. The waste streams have been classified in accordance with the *Waste Classification Guidelines Part 1: Classifying Waste* (EPA 2014) and intended disposal regime is provided in **Table 18**. Further details in relation to each waste stream is provided in the following sections.

Table 18: Waste Classifications

WASTE TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	DISPOSAL
Daily Waste / Staff Waste	General Solid Waste (Putrescible and Non-putrescible)	Landfill Disposal
Poultry Litter	General Solid Waste (Putrescible)	Off site re-use as a fertiliser / soil amendment material.
Dead Birds	General Solid Waste (Putrescible)	Collection and transfer to the Oakburn Protein Recovery Plant for rendering to create a range of protein based products.
Wastewater (Staff Amenities)	Liquid Waste	Treatment and disposal via standard on-site septic systems.
Chemical Containers	Hazardous waste if containers were previously used to store dangerous goods (Class 1, 3, 4, 5 or 8) and from which residues have not been removed by washing or vacuuming. General solid waste (non-putrescible) if the containers have been cleaned by washing or vacuuming.	Collection for recycling / re-use by the licensed contractor/chemical provider.

6.11.1 Non-Recyclable Waste

Day to day general waste (e.g. packaging, used personal bio-security clothing) will be placed into enclosed skip bins and removed from the farm by a licensed contractor on a regular / as needed basis. This type of waste will be transported to and disposed of at a local landfill site. No waste material will be disposed of on-site.

6.11.2 Recyclable Waste

Provision of collection bins for collection of recycling material such as plastic, paper, cardboard, and waste metal will also be provided and removed from the farm by a licensed contractor on a regular basis.

6.11.3 Bedding Material & Litter

At the end of each production cycle, accumulated bedding material and floor litter (comprising of soft wood shavings/rice hulls/chopped straw and manure accumulated) will be removed from each of the sheds. For biosecurity and quarantine control reasons, spent litter will not be stockpiled on-site due to minimise the risk of disease between flocks. It is important to note that the risk of disease transfer is extremely low and the use of poultry litter as a fertiliser on rural properties does not pose a health threat to the land or surrounding community when applied appropriately.

At the end of each cycle, the material will be collected from the sheds and loaded directly into trucks for removal from the site. Truck loads will be covered to minimise emissions of odour and particulate matter into the surrounding environment.

Spent litter and used bedding material is commonly used by farmers within the region as an organic fertiliser, soil additives and rehabilitation agent for agricultural lands. The collected material will be taken from the site by an approved contractor and sold directly to regional farmers or can be sold to commercial composters for creation of value-added products (such as palletised fertiliser or compost).

The safe handling and application of the material once it has left the development site is the responsibility of the end-user. Baiada has prepared a Litter Spreading Management Plan which can be provided to recipients of the litter to minimise the risk of secondary impacts (such as odour or dust) resulting from its application.

6.11.4 Dead Birds

The sheds will be checked regularly for deceased birds which will be promptly removed from the sheds and transferred to the dead bird storage freezer. Every 1-2 days a rigid truck will collect the mortalities from the farm and transport them for rendering at the Oakburn Rendering Plant.

Dead birds will not be stockpiled within the development site for reasons of strict quarantine control and in order to ensure that the remainder of the flock are not at risk by leaving potential sources of infection/disease in close proximity to the sheds.

6.11.5 Mass Mortality Event

In the unlikely event of an emergency animal disease (EAD) outbreak at the farm, the operators will immediately implement the quarantine procedures, contact the DPI and follow all instructions. In the event that an EAD is confirmed, immediate slaughter of farm stock is necessary, slaughter will be managed by DPI. In accordance with the *AUSVETPLAN: Operational Manual – Destruction of Animals*, the preferred method for euthanasia of large numbers of birds in commercial poultry units is gassing with carbon dioxide (CO2) within the poultry sheds.

Once euthanised, a number of disposal options exist for the mortalities including incineration, burial, rendering, composting and anaerobic digestion. The method will be specified by the DPI with consideration or a range of factors, including the scale of the event, the number of mortalities, the site location and logistics associated with the disposal options.

The preferred disposal option for a mass mortality event at the farm would be rendering at the Oakburn Processing Plant. If this option was approved by the DPI, bird carcasses would be collected in sealed trucks, and taken to rendering plant. The Oakburn Rendering Plant has a processing capacity of 22.5 Tonnes Per Hour which can be devoted to processing carcasses in a mass disease event. This processing rate will enable birds from the farm to be rendered in less than 5 days (assuming 24 hour rendering).

6.11.6 Sewerage waste

Effluent from the staff amenities and manager residences will be treated and disposed of on-site via Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS). It is proposed that the waste to be treated and irrigated onto landscaped gardens and lawn areas with signage to be erected advising that the water is reclaimed effluent and not suitable for drinking.

Separate applications to install and operate these AWTS units and associated irrigation areas will be submitted to Council in accordance with the provisions of Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1993, prior to the commencement of operations.

6.11.7 Construction Waste

Waste generated during construction may contain materials such as steel, metals, plastics, paper, cardboard, glass and food waste. The waste will be managed through being stored in secure receptacles to mitigate against waste becoming airborne or accessible to other animals. This will be disposed of to a licensed facility via a waste contractor on an as need basis. As there are adequate provisions to store building and waste materials on site during construction, the preparation of a Construction Waste Management plan will not be necessary.

6.12 BIOSECURITY

There is a major economic incentive for the Applicant to ensure flocks are kept disease free. As well as affecting bird health and welfare, disease can significantly reduce production efficiency and product quality. If a flock requires depopulating, the economic gain from the flock is immediately lost. In addition, there is considerable cost associated with the removal and euthanasia of birds, carcass disposal, shed disinfection and remediation activities. On this basis there is increasing emphasis on maintaining flock health through vaccination, farm hygiene and biosecurity.

The Applicant has demonstrated a strict biosecurity commitment for other broiler farms in the region and will implement a range of proven biosecurity measures at the Silverweir Farm site. Due to Australia's 'island' status, high standards are set by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) and the industry's biosecurity measures provide significant protection again disease entering local poultry flocks.

As a leading company for poultry standards, Baiada endorses high standards for biosecurity which follow the procedures and requirements set out in the following documents (included as **Appendix N**):

- *National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Chicken Growers* produced by the Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc (dated May 2020)**.**
- *Baiada National Biosecurity Manual (*dated 19 June 2023).
- *National Water Biosecurity Manual – Poultry Production (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry [DAFF] 2009)*.
- *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds - New Building* Projects by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024).

Furthermore, the site will be secured with biosecurity measures in place to regulate access and prevent unauthorised visitors to the farm that may bring disease or other risks to the property. The farm has been specifically designed with a separate access road from the other adjoining poultry farms to minimise farm interaction.

Standard operating procedures will also be in place to ensure cleaning of sheds (between batchers) is in accordance with contemporary standards and that vermin control is in place. The placement of birds will also be limited to one cycle at a time per shed to minimise risk of introduction of disease between flocks.

As wild birds are a risk factor in the spread of avian disease, steps will also be taken to minimise bird attractants at the site. This includes regular slashing of the surrounding paddocks, appropriate selection of landscaping species, secure storage of feed, immediate cleaning of any spillage and containment of birds within the shed. The sheds will be checked regularly for deceased birds and any signs of illness, which will be promptly removed from the sheds and transferred to cold storage.

In the unlikely event of an emergency animal disease (EAD) outbreak at the farm, the operators will immediately implement the quarantine procedures, contact the DPI and follow all instructions. If EAD event is confirmed, immediate slaughter of the farm stock will be necessary, which again will be overseen by the DPI. In accordance with the *AUSVETPLAN: Operational Manual – Destruction of Animals*, the preferred method for euthanasia of large numbers of birds in commercial poultry units is gassing with carbon dioxide (CO_2) within the poultry sheds.

Once euthanised, a number of disposal options exist for the mortalities including incineration, burial, rendering, composting and anaerobic digestion. The method will be specified by the DPI with consideration or a range of factors, including bio-security risks, the scale of the event, the number of mortalities, the site location, and the logistics associated each disposal option.

The preferred disposal option for a mass mortality event at the farm would be rendering at the Oakburn Processing Plant. If this option was approved by the DPI, bird carcasses would be collected in sealed trucks, and taken to rendering plant. The Oakburn Rendering Plant has a processing capacity of 22.5 Tonnes Per Hour which can be devoted to processing carcasses in a mass disease event. This processing rate will enable birds from the farm to be rendered in less than 5 days (assuming 24 hour rendering).

6.13 ANIMAL WELFARE

The proposed broiler farm will operate as a grower of poultry on behalf of Baiada Poultry. As such, the farms will be contractually required to adopt the Company's rigorous standards for animal welfare. Baiada is committed to achieving high standards of bird welfare and understand that bird welfare and economic performance go hand-in-hand. As well as being in the bird's best interest, it makes sound economic sense to ensure that flocks are maintained in an environment in which they are safe, comfortable and free from injury or harm.

The proposed farm will employ the latest technology for the collection of live birds, transportation and short term storage and unloading. All measures will be taken to best ensure these animals are not subjected to avoidable stress, cruelty or harm.

There are several Codes of Practice and Guidelines (see **Appendix O**) which are applicable to the operation of broiler farms that are designed to safeguard the health and welfare of poultry during growing, transportation and slaughter associated with meat chicken production. These include:

- *National Animal Welfare Standards for the Chicken Meat Industry (Australian Poultry Cooperate Research Centre [Australian Poultry CRC] 2008).*
- *RSPCA* Approved Farming Scheme Standard - Meat Chickens - AUGUST 2020 v1.1.
- *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Domestic Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2002) (Model Code of Practice).*
- *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Land Transport of Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2006).*

6.14 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

As a supplier to Baiada Poultry, the proposed farm will be operated in strict accordance with the following Baiada documents contain:

- *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds New Building Projects* by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024). These standards address the construction and equipment requirements with respect to animal welfare, biosecurity, farm security, storage, sanitizing, dead bird storage and disposal, and staff amenities etc; and
- *Minimum Operating Standards Broiler Farming* by Baiada (dated 11 January 2022). This manual identifies the minimum requirements with respect to the cleanout, set up and brooding, environmental control – ventilation, drinker management, feed management, grow out, test weights, biosecurity, environmental management and animal welfare for Barn Broiler operations.

7 MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following table presents a summary of the impact management and mitigation measures proposed to be implemented in associated with the proposed development.

Table 19: Management and Mitigation Measures

IDENTIFIED IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES
BIODIVERSITY	**CONSTRUCTION PHASE** **Clearing of native vegetation** • If any additional clearing is required, where possible, construction works should avoid any impact to native vegetation. Where unavoidable, works should minimise impacts as follows: - clearing limits will be clearly marked to prevent unnecessary clearing beyond the extent of the development footprint. **Inadvertent impact to biodiversity values** • Priority will be given during construction to avoid any inadvertent impact to significant biodiversity values within the study area. Avoidance measures should include the following: - all material stockpiles, vehicle parking and machinery storage will be located within cleared areas proposed for clearing, and not in areas of native vegetation that are to be retained; and - implementation of temporary stormwater controls during construction and to ensure that discharges outside the development footprint are consistent with existing conditions. **Clearing of fauna habitat, resulting in fauna injury and/or mortality** • There are no habitat trees that are required to be removed as a result of the proposal. If any additional clearing is required: - Any animals injured during construction should be taken immediately to a Vet for treatment. Any animals suspected to require rehabilitation would be delivered post-veterinary care to an appropriate animal rehabilitator. **Minimise weed infestations** • The following measures should be implemented to prevent exotic plant material from entering/exiting the study area: - no imported/exported material to be permitted unless it has been inspected and confirmed to be free of dirt and mud which may contain weed seeds and vegetative material such as bulbs, root fragment, tubers or rhizomes; and - vehicles and machinery to be clean of soils, vegetation and seeds that have been brushed off or washed down prior to entering the subject land. - A clean down register to be maintained at the entry of the subject land. **OPERATIONAL PHASE** **Avoiding operational impacts on flora and fauna** • Vehicles should not drive off the designated parking area into vegetation within the lot to reduce impact to resident fauna and flora within the study area during the operations phase **Treat existing weed infestations** • As a part of maintenance within the study area any high threat weeds known to occur will be controlled in accordance with appropriate DPI guidelines. Guidelines for the treatment of high threat weeds can be sourced within the DPI website (DPI, 2018). **Reduce impacts of artificial lighting**

	• Any artificial lighting used for security at night should be angled/directed downwards and away from retained vegetation to avoid excessive light pollution affecting adjacent habitat.
ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE	**CONSTRUCTION PHASE** • The proposed work may proceed at the study area without further archaeological investigation • All land and ground disturbance activities must be confined to within the study area, as this will eliminate the risk of harm to Aboriginal objects that may be in adjacent landforms. Should the parameters of the proposal extend beyond the assessed areas, then further archaeological assessment may be required. • This assessment has concluded that there is a low likelihood that the proposed work will adversely harm Aboriginal cultural heritage items or sites. If during works, however, Aboriginal artefacts or skeletal material are noted, all work should cease and the procedures in the Unanticipated Finds Protocol (Appendix 2 of the Due Diligence Assessment) should be followed. • Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts (Appendix 3 of the Due Diligence Assessment) and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974 and the contents of the Unanticipated Finds Protocol. • The information presented here meets the requirements of the Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales. It should be retained as shelf documentation for five years as it may be used to support a defence against prosecution in the event of unanticipated harm to Aboriginal objects.
STORMWATER	**CONSTRUCTION PHASE** • Implement the Stormwater Management Strategy has been prepared by Hanlons Consulting dated 24 July 2024. • Implementation of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan to limit discharge of sediment into water courses. • Overland flows upslope will be diverted around areas of disturbance. • Minimise clearing of ground covers to construction areas only. • Construction managers are required to regular inspect and maintain erosion and sediment control will be implemented to ensure the continued integrity of the temporary erosion and sediment control structures. **Development Design** • The poultry sheds will be constructed on a concrete slab with a poured solid concrete wall to ensure no interaction of external water movement (roof water and stormwater). • Shed roof will be constructed with an overhang to ensure roof water is separated from the internal bird accommodation areas. • Stormwater runoff over the sheds is collected within grass swales running lengthwise each of the building pads and discharged into the retention basin on site. • Stormwater discharge points will be constructed of loose packed rock to slow velocities, disperse water and minimise the risk of erosion at the outlet. **OPERATIONAL PHASE** **Operation, Monitoring and Maintenance** • There will not be any on-site stockpiling of used bedding material, manure or waste materials on site.

	• At the end of each production cycle, bedding material will be promptly removed from the sheds, loaded trucks and transported off-site in covered trucks for disposal. • Dead birds will be collected from the sheds on a daily basis and stored in on-site freezers prior to removal off-site. • The poultry sheds will be cleaned and sanitised at the end of each production cycle using high pressure gurney sprays to minimise water use and are left to dry before new bedding is introduced for a new batch of birds. • The wastewater generated by the staff amenities and caretakers' dwellings will be appropriately treated by a standard septic system in accordance with the requirements of Council. **Chemical Use** • The operation will require limited chemical use, with appropriate systems in place for storage and disposal. • All chemical use within the proposed poultry development will be undertaken in full compliance with the Pesticides Act 1999. • Where appropriate, chemicals used within the proposed poultry development will be approved by the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority as safe and fit for that particular use.
ODOUR AND DUST	**CONSTRUCTION PHASE** • Vegetation buffers should be planted and maintained around the sheds as soon as practicable following construction. Vegetation buffers reduce the magnitude and frequency of any adverse air quality impacts by effectively slowing and filtering air movement, which reduces dust impacts via dust deposition and also assists in odour dispersion. **OPERATIONAL PHASE** **Odour** • The poultry sheds will be tunnel-ventilated which allow good control over internal moisture levels and also promote optimum growing conditions and bird health. The increased airflow and improved feed conversion in modern tunnel-vented sheds assists in the maintenance of the bedding material within the optimal moisture range. • The poultry sheds will be fully enclosed, have wide eaves and be surrounded by concrete bund walls to prevent rainwater entering the sheds and to allow for the controlled discharge of wash down water during cleaning. These measures will reduce the level of moisture within the poultry sheds associated with rainfall, which in turn helps keep litter moisture low, which in turn reduces the risk of abnormal odour emissions. • The poultry sheds will be fitted with nipple drinkers with drip cups to minimise water spillage and prevent elevated moisture levels in the litter. • The feed silos will be fully enclosed to both prevent the entry of rainwater, with wet feed also identified as a potential odour source and minimise emissions of dust/particulate matter when loading and unloading. • The maximum stocking density will not exceed broiler manual specifications. • Regular monitoring and maintenance of the tunnel ventilation systems and bird drinkers will be undertaken to avoid spillage, leaks, lowering of efficiency of fans and uneven distribution. • Stocking densities and bird health within each of the poultry sheds will be regularly checked and, if necessary, appropriate corrective measures will be implemented.

	• Daily monitoring and maintenance of the bedding material will occur to identify, remove and replace any caked material beneath drinking lines and/or areas with excessive moisture content. • Poultry litter will be promptly removed from the sheds and transported off-site in covered trucks at the end of each production cycle during the clean-out phase. Wherever possible the handling of the material will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions, such as times of cold air drainage during early morning or at night and during strong winds. The shed ventilation systems will not be used during litter removal. • Poultry litter will not be stockpiled or spread within the site. • Dead birds will be collected from the sheds on a daily basis and stored in on-site chillers before removal from site. • The insides of the poultry sheds and the surrounds will be maintained at all times to ensure a clean and sanitary environment. • Shed access points will remain closed at all times other than for allowing access to the sheds. • Where possible, activities that may increase odour emissions (for example, bedding material replacement) will be undertaken during daytime hours. **Dust** • The feed silos will be fully enclosed to minimise emissions of particulate matter when loading/unloading. • The poultry sheds will be tunnel-ventilated which allow good control over internal moisture levels and also promote optimum growing conditions and bird health. The increased airflow and improved feed conversion in modern tunnel-vented sheds assists in the maintenance of the bedding material within the optimal moisture range. • Vehicles will not exceed a general speed limit of 40 km/hr within the site and should be confined, where possible, to the internal access roads. • Internal access roads will be appropriately constructed and maintained to minimise dust emissions. • The poultry shed ventilation systems will be maintained to ensure air movement is at design levels. • The poultry sheds will be thoroughly cleaned between batches, with a focus on the fan end of the sheds. • Where possible, the handling of bedding material and litter will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions and shed ventilation systems will not be used during little removal. • Poultry litter will be promptly transported off-site in covered trucks at the end of each production cycle and not stockpiled on spread onsite.
HAZARDS	**<u>OPERATIONAL PHASE</u>** • The Dangerous Goods requirements of the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 shall be complied with (i.e. preparation of risk assessments, registers, notifications, etc.) • Compliance with LPG Standards AS1596:2014 for the storage and handling of LP Gas. • The following safety measures shall be in place: - Non-return valves on both the tank and LPG tanker; - Excess flow valves on the LPG tanker: - Earthing connections: and - Ignition source control measures.

	• The safeguards outlined in Table A1 in Appendix A- Hazard Identification Table shall be implemented including but not limited to: - LPG facilities shall be designed to comply with AS/NZS 1596:2014(11) and shall be installed by an experienced LPG facility supply company. - Ignition source control shall be implemented per AS/NZS60079.14:2022 (9) including earthing to prevent static sparks. - Hoses shall be tested annually as per AS/NZ 1596:2014 and the ADG(7). • Preparation of an Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Services Information Package in accordance with HIPAP No. 1. • The LPG storage shall be subject to hazardous are classification in accordance with AS/NZs 60079 series of standards (8). • A hazardous area verification dossier shall be prepared in accordance with AS/NZS60079.14:2022(9).
VISUAL	• Establish screen planting around the proposed farm with a minimum width of 10m and consisting of a 3 line configuration supporting a mix of shrubs and around the farm to soften potential views of the farm from the nearest sensitive receptors public roads and other vantage points. • Where practical, the vegetation is to include a mix of locally native plants which will support the local fauna and ecosystems
BUSHFIRE	**<u>OPERATIONAL PHASE</u>** • The proposed poultry broiler farm consisting of 16 sheds must comply with the following objectives of Chapter 1 in Planning for *Bushfire Protection 2019*: - Afford buildings and their occupants protection from exposure to a bushfire; - Provide for a defendable space to be located around buildings - defendable space areas for each laying shed, services buildings and water tanks are provided at minimum 10m - Provide appropriate separation between a hazard and buildings which, in combination with other measures, prevent the likely fire spread to buildings; - Ensure that appropriate operational access and egress for emergency service personnel and occupants is available – consider the preparation of a bushfire emergency management and evacuation plan to support the safe operation of the facility; - Provide for ongoing management and maintenance of BPMs; and - Ensure that utility services are adequate to meet the needs of firefighters • The proposed manager's residences must show compliance with the objectives of Chapter 7 in Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 including: - The farm manager's residences are to comply with the Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) of **BAL-LOW** and the 50m APZ provisions of this assessment. Its Asset Protection Zone is to be maintained in a low fuel condition (grass height not exceeding 10cm) all year round and in perpetuity. - Direct access/egress to the proposed entrance road from Appleby Lane - Static water supply for the facility meets the following recommendations of this assessment: (a) 10m defensible space area is provided around each tank; (b) Each steel tank is to facilitate fire appliance access by providing an outlet within 4m of the standing position of a Category 1 tanker, which is likely to pull up on the central access road. The outlet is to be fitted with a 65mm metal Storz outlet with gate or ball valve;

	(c) The tanks are to be topped up to full capacity at the start of each regulated fire season and water levels observed throughout each fire season to ensure sufficient firefighting capacity is maintained for the duration of the season; (d) Ensure the fire safety provisions of the NCC are implemented and consider the ability for firefighting equipment provided on site to protect the entirety of each building (i.e. hoses are located and can stretch the perimeter around buildings, etc).
WASTE	Implement the existing waste management actions documented in the Environment Operations Management Plan Prepare and implement a Site Based Waste Management Plan.
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT	Prepare and implement a Construction Management Plan to ensure the potential impacts associated with the construction phase are appropriately mitigated and managed. The construction management plan will include the requirements for project updates and a procedure for receipt of feedback from the community and first nations groups including provision of a response.
ANIMAL WELFARE AND BIOSECURITY	**CONSTRUCTION PHASE** • Construct the farm in accordance with the *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds - New Building* Projects by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024). **OPERATIONAL PHASE** • Operate the poultry farm in accordance with the following documents (or as amended from time to time): - *Minimum Operating Standards Broiler Farming* by Baiada (dated 11 January 2022). - *National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Chicken Growers* produced by the Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc (dated May 2020). - *Baiada National Biosecurity Manual (*dated 19 June 2023). - *National Water Biosecurity Manual – Poultry Production (Department of* Agriculture*, Fisheries and Forestry [DAFF] 2009)*. - *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds - New* Building Projects by Baiada (dated 03 June 2024). - *National Animal Welfare Standards for the Chicken Meat Industry (Australian Poultry Cooperate Research Centre [Australian Poultry CRC] 2008)*. - *RSPCA* Approved Farming Scheme Standard - Meat Chickens - *AUGUST* 2020 v1.1. - *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Domestic Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2002) (Model Code of Practice)*. - *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Land Transport of Poultry (Primary Industries Standing Committee 2006)*.

8 PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

8.1 PROJECT DESIGN

The proposed development will deliver a new, state of the art, poultry farm with the capacity to accommodate up to 960,000 birds. This will add to the supply meeting the growing demand of the poultry industry in the New England Region and national market. The farm has been specifically located with consideration of the findings of technical assessments concerning, cultural heritage, biodiversity, stormwater, and bushfire, the design and location of the farm has avoided direct impacts.

In addition, the location maximises setbacks to the nearest rural dwellings (sensitive receptors) in proximity to the site. The combination of available setbacks, and the use of best practice methods, has resulted in the technical investigations not forecasting any unacceptable amenity impacts in terms of noise, air emissions, traffic, biosecurity, or hazard risks.

While the poultry farm may be visible from some surrounding vantage points, the low profile of the buildings and the substantial buffer planting around the farm, will significantly soften the development appearance. In addition, the surrounding area accommodates a diverse range of rural activities including neighbouring broiler farms and as such, the presence of a similar operation within the landscape is not expected to result in significant impacts on local and character.

8.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In response to the projected demand for poultry products in the Australian marketplace, there is a need to increase production, bird numbers and processing capacity. Without Baiada's contribution to capacity which will be generated by this development, it is highly likely that there will be a significant shortfall in supply of poultry products in the Australian market in the coming years.

Baiada sees the New England Region as being an ideal location for expansion and the increase in production capacity. This is due to the existing accumulation of high value poultry assets and geographic, infrastructure and commercial attributes in the region which have created a poultry meat cluster. It is rare to have the combination of the assets and infrastructure and presents a unique opportunity to benefit the New England region, and specifically Tamworth from the future demand for poultry products and facilitate growth of the Baiada business.

Baiada's current livestock operations within Tamworth facilitate processing of a maximum of 840,000 birds per week at the existing Out Street Processing facility. Baiada has recently commenced works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) which will have the capacity to process up to 3 million birds a week.

To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in all aspects of the poultry cluster will be required. In this regard, around 300 additional poultry sheds will be required, located within a 2-hour drive of the Oakburn processing plant in accordance with animal welfare considerations. The proposed Silverweir Broiler Farm is a direct response to the need to increase broiler supply.

The *New England North West Regional Plan 2041* is a 20-year strategic blueprint that sets the framework, vision and direction for land-use planning for future needs. The 2041 vision for the region is to become one of Australia's most productive agricultural regions, capitalising on the forecast growth in global demand for food and resources. Intensive agriculture, food and fibre processing are identified as key economic opportunities and drivers for the region. In particular, Part 1 – Productive and Innovative (Objective 3) of the plan identifies that *"The region accommodates food processing clusters for chicken meat and eggs around Tamworth, intensive glass housing of tomatoes near Guyra, and various cattle feedlot facilities. Chicken meat production and processing is the largest intensive agribusiness regional employer and is centred around the Baiada processing plant in Tamworth"*.

Consistent with this objective, the proposed development will support significant growth in the food processing sectors, livestock farming activities and supporting contractors. The Poultry Farm will provide the support the significant expansion of the entire poultry cluster in the region leading to growth in employment and local spending to support the industry. Secondary businesses within the supply chain, particularly those associated with the transport and logistics as well as grain production will also benefit from the broader expansion of poultry cluster.

8.3 STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

The relevant State and local environmental planning instruments are listed in Section 4.1 and are addressed in detail in this EIS. As demonstrated the proposed development complies with the relevant provisions of:

- The Objectives and Evaluation Criteria specified in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
- The SEARs provided in accordance with Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*.
- The *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.
- The *Protection of Environment Operations Act 1997* .
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021* concerning the preparation of a Designated Development Application.
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* concerning consideration of potential contamination, and the storage and use of dangerous goods.
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* concerning potential impacts on koala habitat.
- The *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010* in the that proposed development accords with the objectives sought for the RU1 Zone.
- The *Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010*.

8.4 COMMUNITY VIEWS

At the completion of the consultation process, the Comms Team concluded that *"The process undertaken was thorough and enabled a genuine opportunity for consultation. Stakeholders were provided with multiple channels to receive information and provide feedback."*

The consultation undertaken showed that there was general interest in the project and the activities undertaken increased community awareness about the proposed development. Based on the responses, there is mixed support for the project as well as concerns regarding the potential impact on the surrounding properties. These concerns raised from the neighbouring stakeholders have been addressed as part of the project design and assessment processes. Overall, the feedback from the stakeholders have been taken into consideration through the development of this project.

8.5 LIKELY IMPACTS

8.5.1 Natural Environment

- **Biodiversity –** The direct impacts arising from the project include the removal of 17.34ha of cropped land and 0.22ha of grassland. The vegetations to be removed is identified as Category 1-exempt land within the meaning of Part 5A of LLS Act, as such areas grassland are exempt under Section 6.8 (3) of the BC Act and from further consideration under the BAM.

  Consideration of impacts on significant flora, fauna, and economical communities was undertaken which demonstrated that the project will not result in any unacceptable impacts on the natural environment. Mitigation measures have also been proposed as part of the construction and operation phase to help minimise the potential impacts to biodiversity values that remain present within the study area.

- **Contamination -** A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Database has confirmed that the site is not listed as a contaminated land. In addition, the site has been historically cleared and has been used for cropping, and grazing activities. Based on historic aerial photography, the impact areas associated with the development are located on land that has been in agricultural production since at least 1960 and have not

been used of any industrial or rural industry purposes which would indicate a risk of contamination. Accordingly, the site is expected to be of minimal risk to contamination.

8.5.2 Built Environment

- **Stormwater -** Stormwater flows around the proposed poultry farm discharging to a new drainage lines on the northern side of the facility. This will then be released towards the natural site drainage lines to the Peel river Modelling shows that the proposed system will not create any actionable nuisance for upstream and downstream flows. The stormwater from the construction and operations will not cause any impact to the site or neighbouring properties.
- **Air Emissions -** Emissions modelling demonstrates that the proposed development in conjunction with the existing Taradale and Gidley farms complies with the odour impact assessment criteria at the nearest sensitive receptors.
- **Noise Emissions –** Modelling undertake for the proposed development, indicates that noise emissions from construction, operation and road noise, will not result in any non-compliances to the relevant assessment criteria and as such will not result in any unacceptable noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors.
- **Traffic -** The proposed poultry farm will construct a new BAL/BAR access to Appleby Lane. The surrounding road network is an existing B -Double Routes and is suitable to accommodate development related traffic. Beyond the site entrance, no further upgrade the external road network is required to service traffic generation. The design of the on-site manoeuvring and parking areas comply with the relevant design standards, and sufficient parking provisions has been provided.
- **Visual -** The proposed farm is setback 700m to Appleby Lane to the south and 800m to Fairs Road to the west. As a result of these setbacks, the existing roadside vegetation (particularly along Fairs Road), the proposed landscape planting, and the low profile of the proposed sheds, the development is not expected to have a significant visual impact when viewed from the public road network. Similarly, the nearest rural dwelling is located approximately 1,2km to the west of proposed farm and as such the potential visually impact is expected to significant reduced due to the distance, intervening remnant vegetation, and the planted landscape buffers. With consideration of these factors the proposed poultry farm is not expected to significantly change the existing landscape character create or create any unacceptable visual impact.
- **Bushfire –** The assessment concludes that, on completion, the proposed development will ensure that the development is located in an area that has an acceptable bushfire hazard level (i.e. ≤BAL-LOW), and with the implementation of the recommendations, is considered to be appropriately protected from bushfire and complies with the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection.
- **Dangerous Goods** - The proposed poultry farms require Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in order to provide heating for the birds during the cooler months. LPG gas is stored within tanks on each of the farms. LPG is described as a Dangerous Good and as such, Chapter 3 of the *SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* applies. Across the poultry farm, a total of 30T is proposed to be stored which exceeds the SEPP screening threshold of 10T. No other dangerous goods were exceeded the nominated screening values. Accordingly, the Screening Assessment recommends a Preliminary Hazard Assessment (PHA) be prepared. No other dangerous goods exceeded the nominated screening values. The analysis conducted, it is concluded that the risk at the site boundary will not exceed the acceptable risk criteria and as such, the site would only be classified as potentially hazardous development.

8.5.3 Social

The EIS has considered the impact on the nearby sensitive receptors and has found that the potential impacts are negligible and within the accepted standards, including for odour, noise and traffic. The proposed development will be in keeping with the local rural area in terms of height, setback and visual amenity.

With respect to social impacts, the findings of the detailed technical assessments undertaken in relation to proposed farm demonstrate that construction is unlikely to have significant, negative social impacts provided the proposed mitigation and management measures documented in this EIS are implemented.

Cultural heritage has been reviewed by OzArk who concluded that there are no identified impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage values due to the historic disturbance for agricultural purposes.

8.5.4 Economic

The development will have a positive economic impact in terms of significant construction works and ongoing employment opportunities for local residents.

The Capital Investment Value of the project is estimated to be $28.503 million, a majority of which is associated with construction of the proposed farm. In this regard, it is estimated that the project will create 20 construction jobs to deliver the project, as well as indirect opportunities for local tradespersons to assist with the build (e.g. electricians, plumbers etc).

Once operational, the project will create six (6) full time equivalent (FTE) positions. In addition to the direct employment, the additional farm will create additional opportunities for numerous contractors who support poultry farming including:

- Transport Contractors – transporting day old chicks, clean bedding material, poultry feed, live birds, gas, manure and litter;
- Live Bird Collection Crews;
- Shed cleaning and set up crews; and
- Local maintenance contractors including electrician and plumbers, etc.

With consideration of these employment opportunities, the project will have a positive economic impact and employment impact for the region.

8.5.5 Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development

A discussion of the proposal's compliance with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development is also provided in **Table 20**.

Table 20: Principles of Ecological Sustainability

PRINCIPLE	APPLICANTS RESPONSE
(a) the precautionary principle, namely, that if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by: (i) careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment, and (ii) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options,	**Complies.** There are no threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage that have been identified as part of the detailed assessments undertaken with respect to the project. A number of mitigation, management and monitoring measures are also applied to the existing and proposed operation to ensure that it continues to perform in accordance with all relevant environmental standards.
(b) inter-generational equity, namely, that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations,	**Complies.** The proposed development will not result in the impacts that will reduce the health, diversity and productivity of the environment or reduce the potential benefits of future generations. Conversely, the proposed development will maximise the economic and operational efficiency of the site and support the broader growth and economic development associated with poultry production in the Tamworth region.

PRINCIPLE	APPLICANTS RESPONSE
(c) conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity, namely, that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration,	**Complies.** The direct impacts arising from the project include the removal of 17.34ha of cropped land and 0.22ha of grassland. The vegetations to be removed is identified as Category 1-exempt land within the meaning of Part 5A of LLS Act, as such areas grassland are exempt under Section 6.8 (3) of the BC Act and from further consideration under the BAM. Consideration of impacts on significant flora, fauna, and economical communities was undertaken which demonstrated that the project will not result in any unacceptable impacts on the natural environment. Mitigation measures have also been proposed as part of the construction and operation phase to help minimise the potential impacts to biodiversity values that remain present within the study area.
(d) improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms, namely, that environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as: (i) polluter pays, that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement, (ii) the users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste, (iii) environmental goals, having been established, should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures, including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems.	**Complies.** Waste management is critical to the operation of an efficient poultry farm. Typically, broiler farms generate little waste that cannot be recycled or beneficially re-used. The applicant will adopt measures to ensure that all waste generated from activities on the site are reused and recycled where practical or otherwise managed and disposed of in a manner that will not cause environmental harm.

In accordance with, Section 192(1)(f) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021,* the proposed development complies with the relevant statutory planning instruments and will not result in significant adverse environmental impacts on the receiving environment. The proposal capitalises on the locational features of the site which make it an ideal location for a broiler farm, and supports the ongoing expansion of the broader poultry industry and economic development in the New England North West Region. Where potential impacts have been identified, suitable mitigation and management measures have been implemented. Accordingly, approval of the proposed development is justified.

8.6 SITE SUITABILITY

As demonstrated in this EIS, the site specifically and the New England Region more broadly provides a combination of critical factors which make it an ideal location for construction of a new poultry farm. The primary factor driving the development or a broiler farm in this location is the close proximity of the Oakburn Processing Plant, Tangaratta Feed mill, and Country Road Hatchery which make broiler farming on the site very efficient through significant reductions in the transportation lengths. This has significant benefits with respect to reducing transport costs, reducing greenhouse emissions, and improving animal welfare.

The site been subject to multiple technical investigations which have a confirmed that there are no site based, biophysical, cultural or operational constraints which would limit physical development or operations proposed at the site. Further, technical assessments have also shown that the site is able to be adequately services by the necessary, supporting infrastructure including, water supply, waste water disposal, power and road networks.

With respect to potential amenity impacts, detailed investigations have been undertaken with respect to noise, odour, social and economic aspects with have shown the proposed development will operate within the relevant statutory criteria and will have positive economic impacts in terms of employment, capital expenditure and local spending on goods and services.

Accordingly, the proposed site is considered to be an ideal location for the establishment of a poultry farm.

8.7 PUBLIC INTEREST

The findings of the detailed technical assessments undertaken in relation to the proposed broiler farm show that is not forecast to result in significant or unacceptable adverse environmental impacts on the receiving environment. Where potential impacts have been identified, suitable mitigation and management measures have been implemented. With consideration of the positive impacts, the proposed development involves significant capital investment for construction of the farm and will support the growth in poultry production in the region. With consideration of these factors the project is considered to be in the public interest.

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