PSA CONSULTING

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Willow Tree Free Range Poultry Broiler Farm

AGRIGHT

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

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document: Project Name: Willow Tree Free Range Poultry Broiler Farm
PSA Job Number: 2028
Report Name: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This document has been prepared for:

Contact: Daniel Bryant
Agright Pacific

This document has been prepared by:

Contact: David Ireland
PSA Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd
PO Box 10824, Adelaide Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
Telephone: +61 7 3220 0288
david.ireland@psaconsult.com.au
www.psaconsult.com.au

REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DETAILS	AUTHOR	AUTHORISATION
V3	1 April 2026	FINAL	Cliff Schmidt and Rebecca Lees	David Ireland

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this document produced by PSA Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd is for the use of Agright Griffith Pty Ltd for the purpose for which it has been prepared, and PSA Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd undertakes no duty of care to or accepts responsibility to any third party who may rely upon this document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 APPLICANT DETAILS 1
1.2 PROJECT DETAILS 1
1.2.1 Project Overview 1
1.2.2 Core Objectives 2
1.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND 2
1.4 RELATED DEVELOPMENT 3
1.5 RESTRICTIONS AND COVENANTS 3
2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT 4
2.1 AUSTRALIAN POULTRY INDUSTRY 4
2.2 NEW ENGLAND POULTRY CLUSTER 4
2.3 REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT 6
2.3.1 New England North West Regional Plan 2041 6
2.3.2 Local Planning Context 9
2.4 SITE CONTEXT 9
2.4.1 The Site 9
2.4.2 The Surrounding Area 11
2.5 IMPORTANT NATURAL OR BUILT FEATURES 12
2.5.1 Topography 12
2.5.2 Geology and Soils 12
2.5.3 Flooding and Drainage 12
2.5.4 Vegetation 14
2.5.5 Biodiversity Values 14
2.5.6 Heritage 14
2.6 URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE 14
2.6.1 Water Supply 14
2.6.2 Gas Supply 14
2.6.3 Electricity Supply 14
2.6.4 Telecommunications 15
2.6.5 Road Network and Site Access 15
2.7 POTENTIAL HAZARDS 15
2.7.1 Bushfire 15
2.8 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES 15
3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION 18
3.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW 18
3.2 PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN 19
3.2.1 Physical Works 19
3.2.2 Earthworks 21
3.2.3 Landscape Buffers 21
3.2.4 Stormwater Management 22
3.2.5 Managers Residences 22
3.3 USES AND ACTIVITIES 22
3.3.1 Farm Operations 22
3.3.2 Free Range Areas 23
3.3.3 Hours of Operation 23

3.3.4 Haulage 23
3.3.5 Employment 23
3.4 INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISIONS AND UPGRADES 24
3.4.1 Electricity 24
3.4.2 Gas Supply 24
3.4.3 Water Supply 24
3.4.4 Waste Water 24
3.5 PROJECT TIMING 25
4. STATUTORY CONTEXT 26
4.1 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS 26
4.1.1 State Environmental Planning Policies 28
4.1.2 Liverpool Plains Shire Local Environmental Plan 2011 31
4.1.3 Integrated Authorities 34
5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 35
5.1 ENGAGEMENT CARRIED OUT 35
5.1.1 Government Departments and Agencies 35
5.1.2 Community Consultation 36
5.2 COMMUNITY VIEWS 36
5.2.1 Summary of Community Responses 36
5.2.2 Community Consultation Outcomes 37
5.3 ENGAGEMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT 37
5.3.1 Public Notification 37
5.3.2 Engagement Activities for Construction and Operational Phases 37
6. ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION OF IMPACTS 37
6.1 BIODIVERSITY 38
6.1.1 The Existing Environment 38
6.1.2 Matters of Ecological Significance 39
6.1.3 Potential Koala Habitat 39
6.1.4 Matters of National Environmental Significance 40
6.1.5 Potential Impacts 40
6.1.6 Mitigation Measures 40
6.2 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE 42
6.2.1 Assessment Results 42
6.2.2 Management and Mitigation Measures 42
6.3 CONTAMINATION 42
6.4 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT 43
6.4.1 Stormwater Quantity 43
6.4.2 Stormwater Quality 43
6.4.3 Mitigation Measures 44
6.5 AIR QUALITY 44
6.5.1 Modelling Methodology 44
6.5.2 Meteorological Data 45
6.5.3 Sensitive Receptors 45
6.5.4 Air Quality Assessment Results 45
6.5.5 Mitigation Measures 48
6.6 NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT 50
6.6.1 Existing Acoustic Environment 50
6.6.2 Assessment Results 51

6.7 TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT 53
6.7.1 Existing Conditions 53
6.7.2 Proposed Development Traffic Generation 55
6.7.3 Trip Distribution 56
6.7.4 Road Safety 56
6.7.5 Site Access and Intersection Upgrades 56
6.7.6 Car Parking and On-Site Manoeuvring 56
6.8 VISUAL IMPACTS 57
6.8.1 Existing Landscape Character 57
6.8.2 Visual Impact 57
6.8.3 Shed Colours and Glare 58
6.9 CHEMICAL USE AND STORAGE 58
6.9.1 Screening Assessment 58
6.9.2 Preliminary Hazard Assessment 59
6.10 BUSHFIRE ASSESSMENT 60
6.10.1 Asset Protection Zones 60
6.10.2 Emergency Access 60
6.10.3 Emergency and Evacuation 60
6.10.4 Water Supply and Utilities 61
6.10.5 Conclusion 61
6.11 WASTE MANAGEMENT 61
6.11.1 Non-Recyclable Waste 61
6.11.2 Recyclable Waste 61
6.11.3 Bedding Material & Litter 61
6.11.4 Dead Birds 62
6.11.5 Mass Mortality Event 62
6.11.6 Sewerage Waste 62
6.11.7 Construction Waste 62
6.12 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS 62
6.13 ANIMAL WELFARE 63
6.14 BIOSECURITY 64
6.15 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE 64
7. MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES 66
8. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION 69
8.1 PROJECT DESIGN 69
8.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT 69
8.3 STATUTORY COMPLIANCE 70
8.4 COMMUNITY VIEWS 70
8.5 LIKELY IMPACTS 70
8.5.1 Natural Environment 70
8.5.2 Built Environment 71
8.5.3 Social 72
8.5.4 Economic 73
8.5.5 Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development 73
8.6 SITE SUITABILITY 74
9. CONCLUSION 76

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 **DEVELOPMENT PLANS**
APPENDIX 2 **SEARS RESPONSE**
APPENDIX 3 **CERTIFICATES OF TITLE**
APPENDIX 4 **GEOTECHNICAL REPORT**
APPENDIX 5 **ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 6 **CULTURAL HERITAGE DUE DILIGENCE ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 7 **BUSHFIRE THREAT ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 8 **CIVIL DESIGN STATEMENT**
APPENDIX 9 **TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 10 **DANGEROUS GOODS SCREENING ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 11 **PRELIMINARY HAZARDS ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 12 **AIR QUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 13 **NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
APPENDIX 14 **GUIDELINES – ANIMAL WELFARE**
APPENDIX 15 **GUIDELINES – FREE RANGE**
APPENDIX 16 **GUIDELINES – BIOSECURITY**
APPENDIX 17 **GUIDELINES – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Plan (Construction Cohort, 2026). 2
Figure 2: Consumption of Poultry Meat in Australia (ACMF, 2025) 4
Figure 3: Chicken Meat Produces in Australia (ABARES, 2025) 4
Figure 4: New England Poultry Cluster 5
Figure 5: Agricultural Freight Network (Department of Planning and Environment, 2022) 8
Figure 6: Site Aerial (NSW eSpatial, 2025) 10
Figure 7: Site Photo of Proposed Willow Tree Farm Area (Wildthing, 2026) 10
Figure 8: Nearest Sensitive Receptors (SoundIN, 2026) 11
Figure 9: NSW Hydroline Mapping (NSW Water, 2026) 13
Figure 10: Liverpool Plains DCP 2012 - Flood Prone Land Map (Liverpool Plains, NSW Water, 2026) 13
Figure 11: Site Plan (Construction Cohort, 2026) 19
Figure 12: Farm Layout Visualisation (Construction Cohort, 2026) 20
Figure 13: Willow Tree Broiler Farm Elevations (Construction Cohort, 2026) 20
Figure 14: Existing Landscape Buffers (Google Earth, 2026) 21
Figure 15: Vegetation Map (Wildthing, 2024) 39
Figure 16: Sensitive receptors (Astute Environmental Consulting, 2026) 45
Figure 17: Odour Contour - Farm Placement Day 1 (Astute, 2026) 47
Figure 18: Proposal Site and Sensitive Receivers (SoundIn, 2026) 51
Figure 19: Road Hierarchy (PSA Consulting, 2026) 53
Figure 20: Road Hierarchy (PSA Consulting, 2026) 54

TABLES

Table 1: Site Details 1
Table 2: Site Details 9
Table 3: Alternatives to the Project 15
Table 4: Statutory Requirements 26
Table 5: SEPP Applicability 28
Table 6: Liverpool Plains 2011- Applicable Clauses 31
Table 7: Community Consultation Activities 36
Table 8: Community Responses 36
Table 9: Odour Concentration Receptor Results – Day 1 to 28 Placement (Astute, 2026) 48
Table 10: Predicted Construction Noise Levels (SoundIn, 2026) 52
Table 11: Predicted operational Noise Levels - LAeq,15min (SoundIn, 2026) 53
Table 12: Road Hierarchy Detail (Source TfNSW) 54
Table 13: Construction Traffic Generation 55
Table 14: Operation Traffic Generation 55
Table 15: Development Traffic Distribution (Source: Agright, PSA) 56
Table 16: Dangerous Goods Storage Quantities 59
Table 17: Management and Mitigation Measures 66
Table 18 Principles of Ecological Sustainability 73

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 APPLICANT DETAILS

The proponent of the proposed development is Agright Griffith Pty Ltd as trustee for Agright Griffith Unit Trust (herein referred to as Agright). The land has been acquired by Agright for the purpose of establishing a free-range poultry broiler farm. The managing director of Agright (Daniel Bryant) has over 25 years' experience in intensive animal husbandry and Agribusinesses, including 15 years managing ProTen Limited which is Australia's largest growers of broiler chickens, producing around 133 million chickens per year and representing 19% of Australia's total flock. Details of the Applicant is provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Site Details

APPLICANT:	Agright Griffith Pty Ltd
POSTAL ADDRESS:	Suite 201, 201 Miller Street, North Sydney 2060
ABN:	59 654 839 773
APPLICANT CONTACT:	Daniel Bryant Alastair Meehan

1.2 PROJECT DETAILS

1.2.1 Project Overview

The project involves the construction of the Willow Tree free range poultry broiler farm (the Willow Tree Farm) on land at 755 Warrah Ridge Road, Warrah Ridge, NSW 2343 (formally described as Lot 42 on DP37629) as shown in ***Figure 1*** below.

The Willow Tree Farm will be comprised of fourteen (14) poultry sheds where free range meat chicken (broilers) will be grown for human consumption. Each shed will accommodate a maximum of 57,900 birds giving the farm a maximum of capacity of 810,600 birds. Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 -10 weeks with an average of approximately 6 production cycles each year.

The proposed sheds will be constructed in two rows running north-south across the site. 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 free-range areas are located adjoining and between the sheds.

Other ancillary buildings and supporting infrastructure will include grain storage silos, staff amenities, access roads, gas storage infrastructure, farm workshop, storage sheds, water pipes, pump shed and water storage tanks, stormwater retention dam, along with two new four-bedroom managers houses on site.

The proposed operation also includes an ancillary solar farm (~1800kW solar tracking system) and associated battery energy storage system for electricity production. A Site Plan is included as **Figure 1**. A copy of this plan is also included as **Appendix 1**.

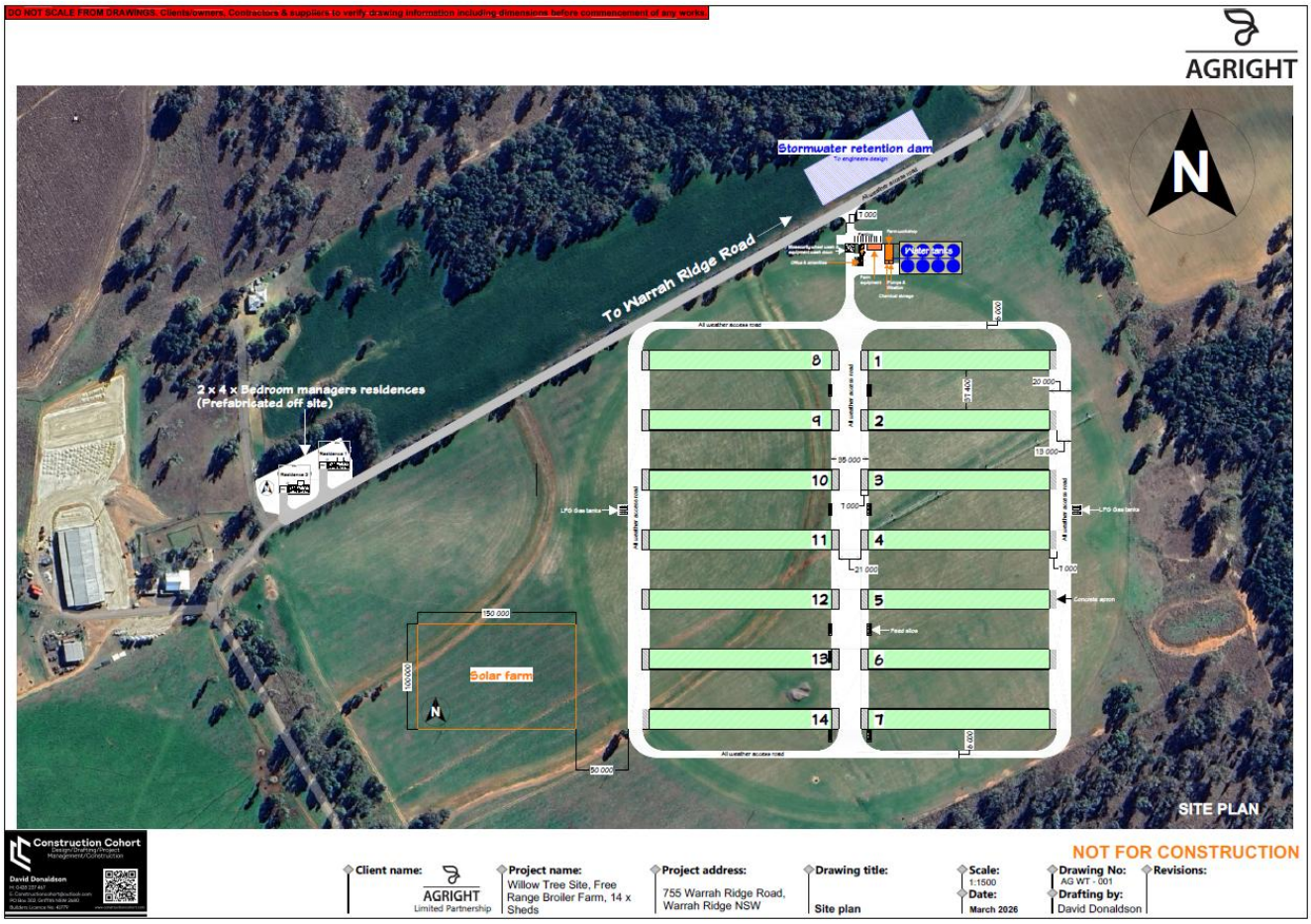


Figure 1: Site Plan (Construction Cohort, 2026).

1.2.2 Core Objectives

The core objectives of the project are as follows:

- Develop a modern, best practice and purpose-built free-range poultry broiler farm.
- Support expansion of the existing poultry meat cluster within the New England Region.
- Provide a safe and reliable supply of poultry meat within the region to satisfy market demand.

1.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

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. The New England region is an ideal location for expansion of poultry 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.

In this regard, Baiada Poultry is completing works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth with the capacity process up to 3 million birds a week. To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in the supply of birds (approximately 350 additional sheds) will be required.

As such, the construction of a new poultry broiler farm is proposed to support the approved increase in processing at Oakburn.

1.4 RELATED DEVELOPMENT

Based on review of the Liverpool Plains Shire DA Tracker, and the NSW Major Projects Portal, there are no existing Development Applications of Recent Approvals in proximity to the site which would result in potential cumulative impacts.

1.5 RESTRICTIONS AND COVENANTS

The site is not subject to any restrictions or covenants. Title Searches and Deposited Plans of the site are provided in **Appendix 3**.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 AUSTRALIAN POULTRY INDUSTRY

Research undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) indicates that total chicken meat consumption in Australia has increased by over 50% in the last 30 years and now representing approximately 50% of the total meat consumption.

The ABARES commodities report shows the chicken continues to be the most consumed meat in Australia, driven by the product's versatility, convenience and a lower price point compared to beef, lamb, pork. Per capita poultry consumption has grown to be over 51kg per person in 2025. As shown in **Figure 2**, chicken meat production in Australia has grown steadily and growth is forecast to continue. As a result of the ongoing and predicted growth in demand for poultry meat products in Australia, significant expansion of the industry is required.

The Australian Chicken Grower's Council (ACGC) estimates that between 18-20% of poultry meat consumed in Australia is currently sourced from free range farms accredited by Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia (FREPA). As such, a commensurate increase in free range poultry farms is also required as part of the expansion of broiler production in Australia.

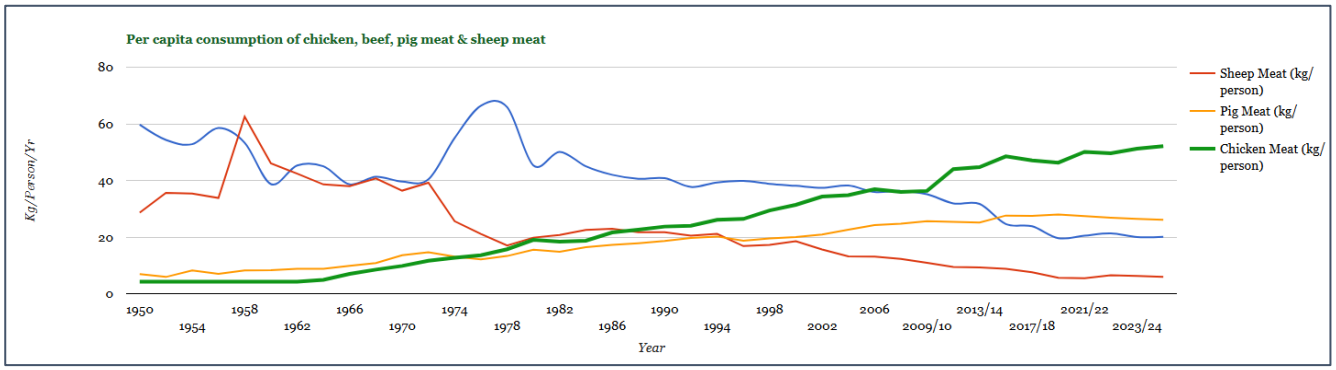


Figure 2: Consumption of Poultry Meat in Australia (ACMF, 2025)

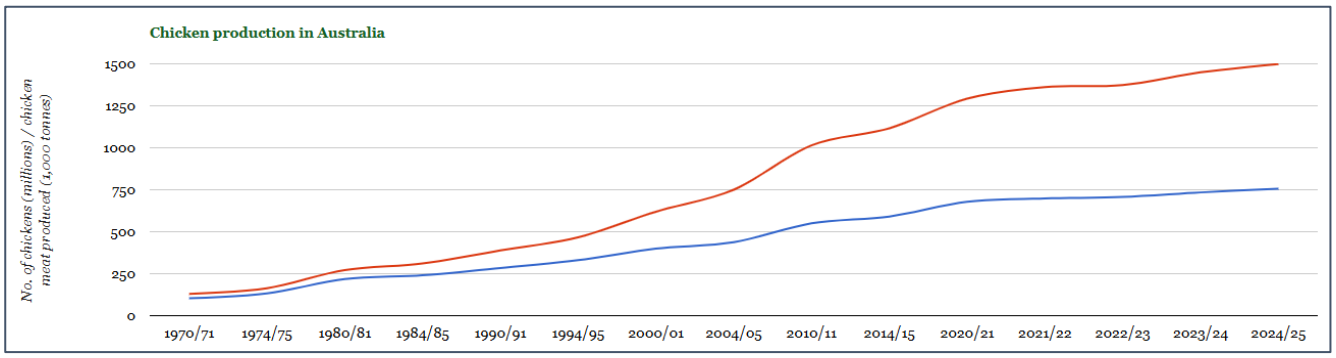


Figure 3: Chicken Meat Produces in Australia (ABARES, 2025)

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. The New England region is an ideal location for expansion of poultry 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 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.

This combination of factors is only present in a handful of areas across Australia which results in the long-term protection of the poultry industry in the New England Region. In this regard, the processer, Baiada Poultry is completing works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth which with the capacity process up to 3 million birds a week. To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in the supply of birds (approximately 350 additional sheds) will be required.

This growth is expected to occur via an expansion of existing farms, as well as new farms located on suitable sites, located within a 2–hour drive of the processing facility to comply with animal welfare considerations. The relationship between the various components of the New England Poultry Cluster is shown diagrammatically in **Figure 4**.

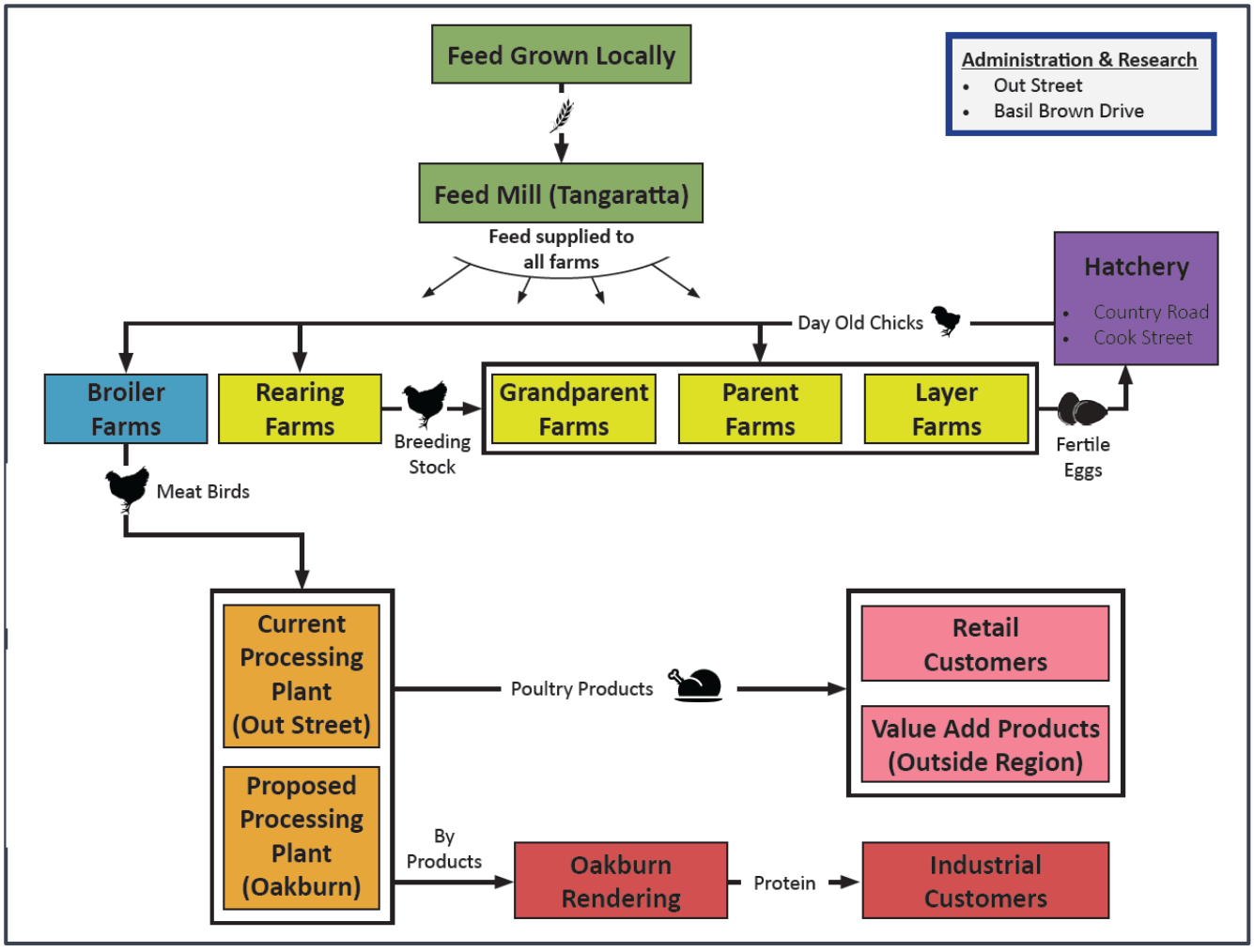


Figure 4: New England Poultry Cluster

The poultry industry is also supported by many contractors providing services including but not limited to:

- Transport and logistics.
- Bedding suppliers and used litter removal.
- Bird collection and transportation.
- Service, cleaning and maintenance of all facilities.
- Gas and electricity services.

All of these supporting industries have a presence in the New England Region and are also expanding to meet the coming growth in demand for their services.

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 of the New England North West Region prepared by the NSW State Government. The vision for the region contained in the plan includes the following statement 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*.

Development of the Willow Tree Farm aligns with the vision for the region as it builds on the regions existing strength in agricultural production and will support significant growth in agriculture, agribusiness and livestock production. The proposed poultry farm will support the 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 recognises 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 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 Willow Tree Farm will support the 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 part 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 in the broader poultry cluster. The Willow Tree Farm will be a modern facility that adopts best practice equipment and methodologies, reinforcing the areas reputation as a high-quality poultry production hub. The proposed development will have a positive impact on the future growth, community need and regional 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 Willow Tree Farm will support economic activity in the area providing local employment and in turn support economic development in 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 5**, the major roads in and around Tamworth, Gunnedah and Quirindi are identified as part of the Agricultural Freight network, with the movement of poultry specifically identified as a key agricultural commodity.

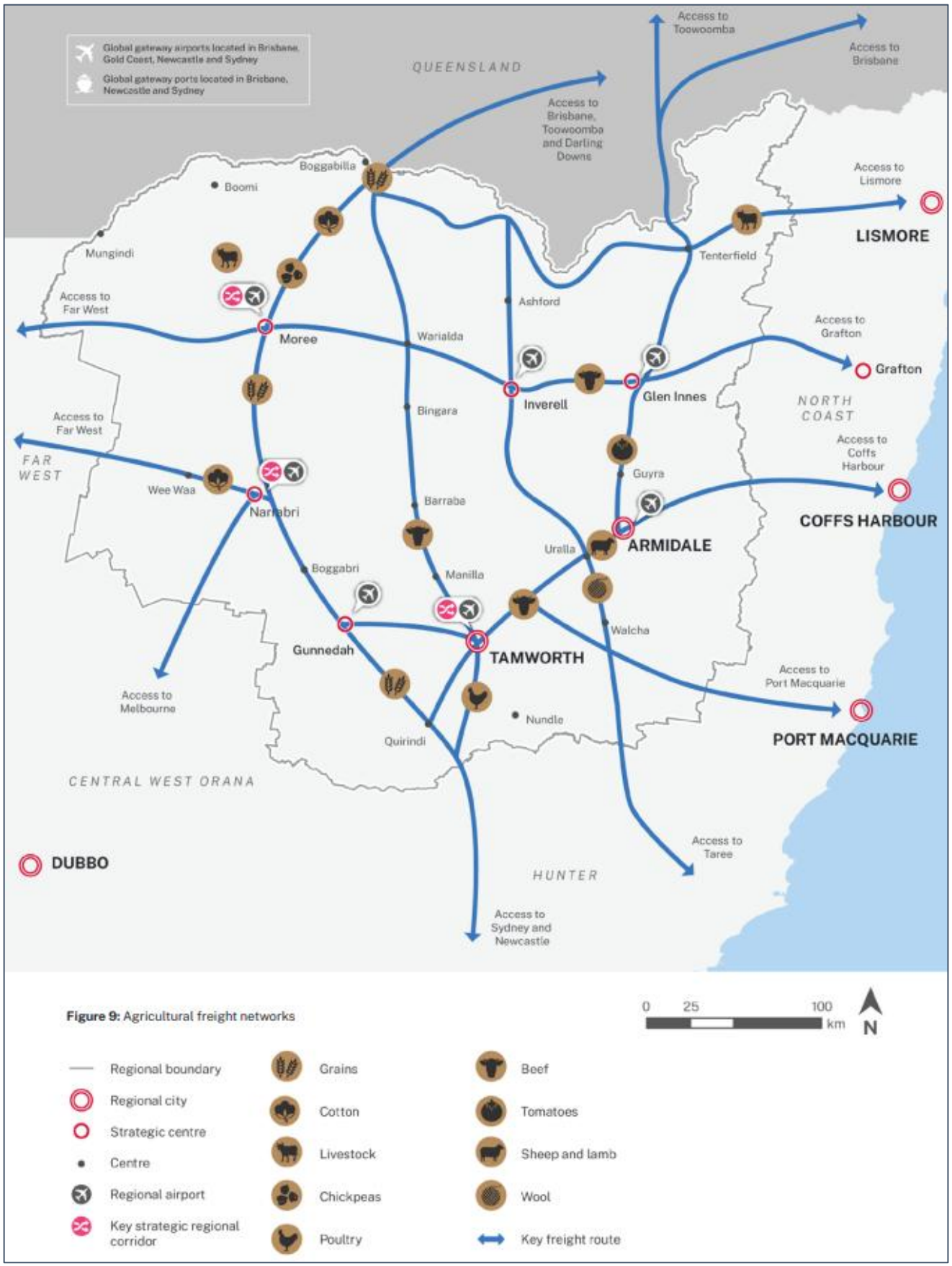


Figure 5: Agricultural Freight Network (Department of Planning and Environment, 2022)

2.3.2 Local Planning Context

Under the *Liverpool Plains Shire Local Environment Plan 2011*, the subject site is located in the RU1 Primary Production Zone. The proposed farm is defined as *'intensive livestock agriculture'* and is permitted with consent within the Primary Production (RU1) zone.

The objectives of the RU1 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 the zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*

The proposed poultry farm is a rural use located within the Primary Production zone and surrounded by a number of other agricultural activities including cropping and grazing. The proposed farm will increase the diversity of primary industries operating in the local area, and not result in the fragmentation of rural land, or restrictions on existing agricultural activities. The proposed development will also employ an additional six full time workers, providing additional employment in the local area. As demonstrated in this EIS the Willow Tree Farm will be constructed and operated in accordance with all relevant environmental standards and will not result in any unacceptable impacts on other land uses within the Zone. Accordingly, the proposed development strongly aligns with the objectives of the zone.

2.4 SITE CONTEXT

2.4.1 The Site

Table 2: Site Details

ADDRESS	755 Warrah Ridge Road, Warrah Ridge, NSW 2343
PROPERTIES	Lot 42/-/DP37629
LAND OWNER	Agright Griffith Pty Ltd
APPLICANT	Agright Griffith Pty Ltd as Trustee for Agright Griffith Unit Trust
CONSENT AUTHORITY	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
ZONING	RU1 Primary Production Zone
TOTAL SITE AREA	445 Ha
PROJECT FOOTPRINT AREA	45 Ha

The proposal relates to land at 755 Warrah Ridge Road, Warrah Ridge, NSW (formally described as Lot 42 on DP37629). The subject site has a total area of 445 hectares. The project footprint is contained within a 45 ha area on the site as indicated by the red dashed line on **Figure 6**. Access to the site is achieved via an internal driveway connecting to Warrah Ridge Road. As shown in **Figure 7**, the site has been historically cleared and used for extensive agricultural. No additional clearing outside the cropping areas is required to facilitate the construction of the farm.

A copy of a current Certificate of Title for the property subject to this Development Application is included in **Appendix 3**.

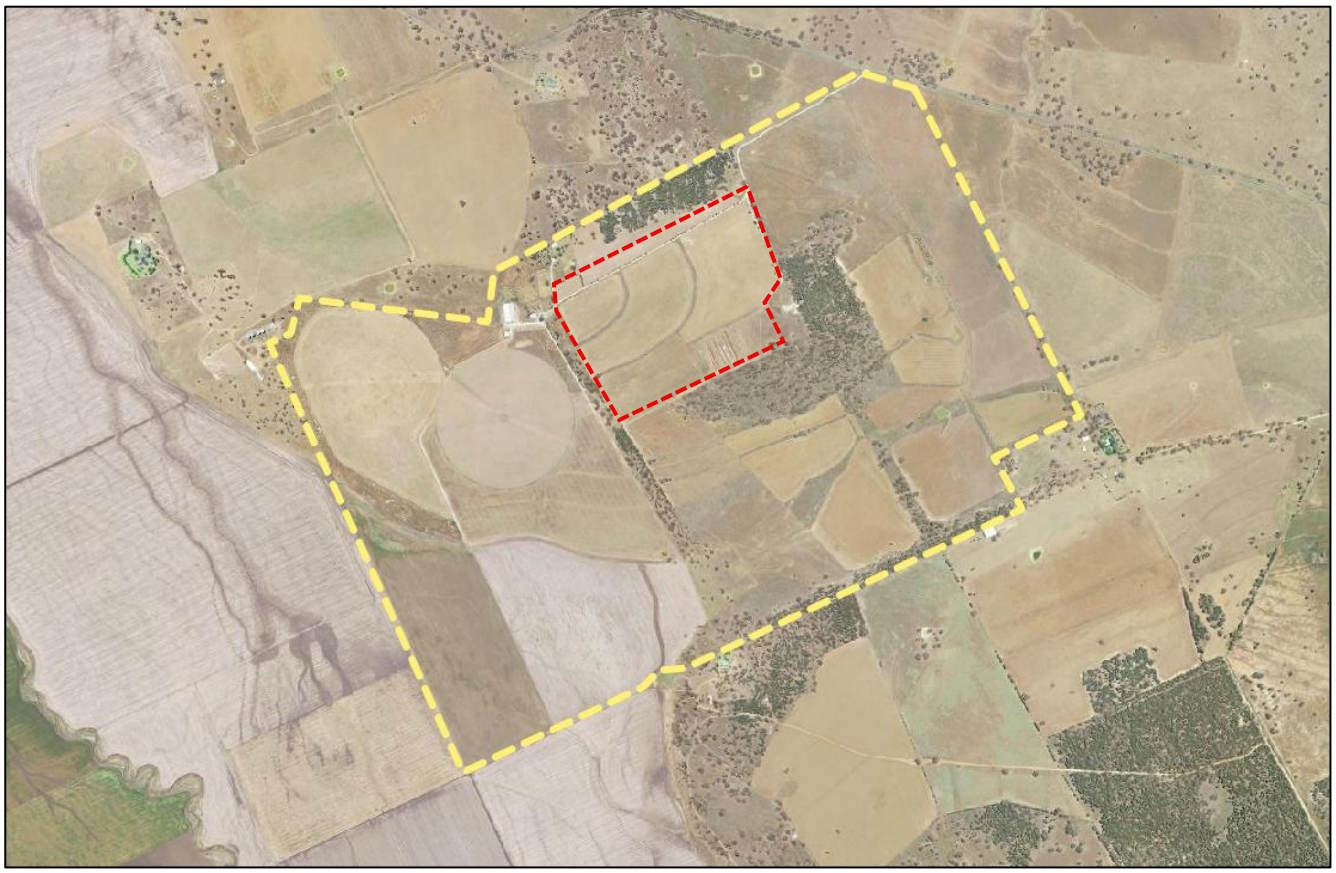


Figure 6: Site Aerial (NSW eSpatial, 2025)

Figure 7: Site Photo of Proposed Willow Tree Farm Area (Wildthing, 2026)

2.4.2 The Surrounding Area

As outlined above, the site is situated in the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area, approximately 18km southwest of Quirindi. The site is surrounded by rural properties, predominantly focused on extensive agriculture and grazing. The nearest sensitive receptors are rural dwellings and are shown in **Figure 8**. The closest rural dwelling (R1) to the proposed farm is located ~800m to the north of the closest poultry shed.

Figure 8: Nearest Sensitive Receptors (SoundIN, 2026)

2.5 IMPORTANT NATURAL OR BUILT FEATURES

2.5.1 Topography

The site is situated within a region characterised by gently sloping terrain. The land on which the farm is to be constructed is flat and has a slight fall from East to West from ~360m AHD to 350m AHD at a slope of less than 2%.

2.5.2 Geology and Soils

The 1:100,000 Manilla Geology Map indicates that the site is located near the boundary between the following geological groups:

- Pilliga Sandstone – conglomerate (Jinp_c) which comprises medium to coarse grained sandstone and conglomerate, with minor mudstone, siltstone, fine grained sandstone and coal.
- Purlawaugh Formation (J__p) that comprises sandstone with thinly bedded siltstone, mudstone and thin coal seams.

A Geotechnical Report has been undertaken by Regional Geotechnical Solutions and is provided in **Appendix 4**. Within this report the Willow Tree Farm site was observed to include the following soil compositions:

- **Topsoil:** Sandy SILT, low plasticity, generally to 0.2 to 0.3m, however, up to 0.5m was encountered in some locations.
- **Residual Soil:** Silty Sandy CLAY, medium to high plasticity, stiff becoming very stiff with depth to at least the maximum depth of the boreholes of 3m. Along the southern edge of Site 2, Clayey Sandy GRAVEL was encountered from 1.4m in BH15 and BH16 that resulted in practical auger refusal at 1.6m, and Clayey Sand from 1.9m in BH21 and BH22 with refusal at 2.5m

It is also noted within the assessment that groundwater was not encountered within any of the borehole logs. Groundwater levels do fluctuate due to inclement weather, seasonal variations, or due to reasons that may not have been apparent at the time of the site investigation.

An existing groundwater bore with a depth of 67m (Works Approval 90CA826858) attached to an extraction licence for 240 Units / ML under water licence WAL 28037 from the New England Fold Belt Mdb Groundwater Source is currently utilised on site for crop irrigation.

2.5.3 Flooding and Drainage

The subject site is located within the Namoi River and Greater Murray Darling Basin Catchment. Surface water runoff from the site flows to the west towards Big Jacks Creek which flows into Warrah Creek before connecting to the Mooki River. The Mooki River flows into the Namoi River.

As shown in **Figure 9**, there is a first and second order stream mapped to the North and South of the proposed farm. No works are proposed within 40m of these mapped streams, and as such a controlled activity permit for works on waterfront land is not required.

The flood Planning Level (FPL) adopted in the Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011 is defined as the level of a 1:100 ARI (average recurrent interval) flood event plus 0.5m freeboard. As shown in **Figure 10**, while the mapped streams to the North and South of the farm are within the FPL, the proposed farm is not.

Figure 9: NSW Hydroline Mapping (NSW Water, 2026)

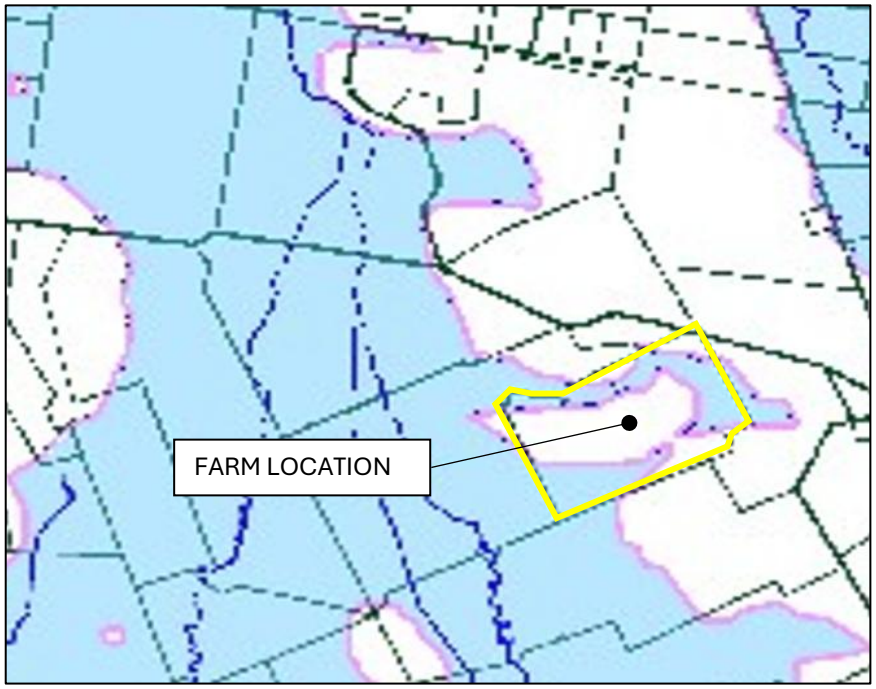


Figure 10: Liverpool Plains DCP 2012 - Flood Prone Land Map (Liverpool Plains, NSW Water, 2026)

2.5.4 Vegetation

The subject site is located within an area which has been historically cleared and is currently used for cropping of oats. The impacted cropping areas includes land currently under irrigation (Centre Pivot Irrigation) and dry land farming.

A tree survey found eighty (80) trees within proximity to the impact area. A row of planted mature native trees largely specimens of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum) were present along northern sections of the access road and to the north and east of the proposed managers residences. A row of introduced *Fraxinus* sp. (Ash) was also present along the southern section of the access road in the west. None of these trees will be impacted as a result of the proposed works.

Areas of remnant woodland are also present to the south and east of the proposed farm and north of the existing access road. Vegetation assemblages are most consistent with one Plant Community Type (PCT), being PCT 437 which is Yellow Box Grassy Woodland on lower hillslopes and valley flats in the southern NSW Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. This PCT is present to the south and west of the proposed farm area. An area of PCT 437 was also located to the north of the access road. No additional clearing outside of the established cropping areas is required to facilitate the construction of the Willow Tree farm and as such, none of these areas will be directly affected by the works.

2.5.5 Biodiversity Values

The proposed farm is located centrally on the land holding in an area that has been historically cleared and is currently used for cropping. The site is not included on the State's Biodiversity Values Map and no additional clearing outside of the established cropping areas is required to facilitate the construction of the farm. Due to the historic clearing and ongoing cultivation, the proposed development is not expected to have a significant impact on any items of ecological significance. Regardless, an Ecological Assessment (**Appendix 5**) has been undertaken by Wildthing Environmental Consultants in support of the project.

The assessment concludes that the proposal will result in a small incremental reduction of highly disturbed cropping habitat, however with the mitigation measures to be implemented, the proposal is unlikely to disrupt the life cycle of any threatened species, endangered populations or endangered ecological communities.

2.5.6 Heritage

A search of the AHIMS Online Database indicates that there are no recorded Aboriginal Sites or Objects within a 1 km radius of the site. While the site has been located with the heavily disturbed cropping areas, a Due Diligence Assessment (**Appendix 6**) 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*, to ensure adequate assessment and consideration of potential values.

2.6 URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

2.6.1 Water Supply

Water supply for existing agricultural activities is currently provided via a bore (Works Approval 90CA826858) with an extraction licence for 240 Units / ML under water licence WAL 28037 from the New England Fold Belt Mdb Groundwater Source. A portion of this water will be used by the Willow Tree Farm.

2.6.2 Gas Supply

The site is not currently serviced by any reticulated gas supply.

2.6.3 Electricity Supply

The site is not currently serviced by electricity infrastructure capable of delivering the operational loads required for the farm to operate. The applicant is planning to augment Essential Energy's network to secure HV power to the site,

and/or supply power using an onsite microgrid comprising an ~1800kW solar farm on ground mounted trackers and an associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) arrangement.

2.6.4 Telecommunications

The site is not currently serviced by telecommunications infrastructure. Telstra's 5G network is available on the site as is Starlink Internet.

2.6.5 Road Network and Site Access

Vehicular access to the site is currently achieved via Warrah Ridge Road, which is a sealed, two way undivided carriageway. The posted speed limit of Warrah Ridge Road is 100km/h and connects to the New England Highway via Merriwa Road.

2.7 POTENTIAL HAZARDS

2.7.1 Bushfire

The site is located on land that is mapped by the RFS as bush fire prone land containing Category 3 Vegetation. *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 have been engaged to prepare a Bushfire Threat Assessment to address the requirements that are applicable to 'Other development'. A Copy of this report in Included as **Appendix 7**.

The assessment concludes that, on completion, the proposed development is in an area that has an acceptable bushfire hazard level (i.e. ≤BAL-29), and with the implementation of the recommendations, is appropriately protected from bushfire and complies with the requirements of PBP.

2.8 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives to carrying out the development include:

1. Do nothing;
2. Expanding operations on the existing Agright 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, 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, suitable power supply, B-Double access, minimal constraints (e.g. flooding, heritage, ecological significance, slope, bushfire), and appropriate buffers to sensitive receptors, that could otherwise restrict the development of a broiler farm.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE	DISCUSSION
	As outlined above, to support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, and additional 350 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 in the region is not an option. The Australian Chicken Grower's Council (ACGC) estimates that between 18-20% of poultry meat consumed in Australia is currently sourced from free range farms accredited by Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia (FREPA). As such, a commensurate increase in free range poultry farms is also required as part of the expansion of broiler production in New England. With respect to this particular site, the consequence of doing nothing would require an additional 14, free range sheds being constructed on an alternate property elsewhere within the region. For the reasons outlined within this report, the applicant strongly considers that this subject site has a number of inherent characteristics which make it ideal for poultry production. Accordingly, doing nothing on this site is a poor outcome.
EXPAND EXISTING BROILER 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 350 sheds required to support the Oakburn Processing Plant cannot be achieved at existing 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 any available, alternate site which has the same contribution of factors which make the Willow Tree Farm viable and suitable for the development, including: • A location within 2 hours of the Oakburn Processing Plant in accordance with Animal Welfare requirements (Willow Tree is ~1 hour 15mins 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. • Suitable geology to enable construction of the farm. • 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 Willow Tree Farm can be delivered in an efficient manner with minimal negative environmental, social or economic impacts. As such, it is considered that this specific site is very suitable to accommodate a new free range farm. Moreover, where appropriate, alternate

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE	DISCUSSION
	sites are identified, these are likely also being pursued in parallel 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 for birds and to 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 for the Applicant to achieve its core objectives, which also align strongly with the strategic objectives as set out within the Regional and Local Planning documents above.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Agright is seeking development consent under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to develop a poultry broiler farm on land at 755 Warrah Ridge Road, Warrah Ridge, NSW 2343 (formally described as Lot 42 on DP37629).

The Willow Tree Farm will be comprised of fourteen (14) poultry sheds where free range meat chicken (broilers) will be grown for human consumption. Each shed will accommodate a maximum of 57,900 birds giving the farm a maximum of capacity of 810,600 birds. Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 -10 weeks with an average of approximately 6 production cycles each year.

The proposed sheds will be constructed in two rows running north-south across the site. 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 free-range areas are located adjoining and between the sheds.

Other ancillary buildings and supporting infrastructure will include grain storage silos, staff amenities, access roads, gas storage infrastructure, farm workshop, storage sheds, water pipes, pump shed and water storage tanks, stormwater retention dam, along with two new four-bedroom managers houses on site.

The proposed operation also includes an ancillary solar farm (~1800kW solar tracking system) and associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) for electricity production. A copy of the development plans is included in **Appendix 1**.

Specifically, the new poultry farm will incorporate the following built components:

- Construction of 14 free range broiler sheds in two rows of 7 sheds.
- The broiler sheds will be 172m x 18.7m wide with an internal floor area of 3,216.4m^2
- Fenced Free Range Areas between the sheds.
- 24 Silos for holding of broiler feed.
- 8 x 3 Tonne LPG storage tanks.
- Staff amenities building.
- Workshop.
- Storage Shed.
- On site driveways, parking and manoeuvring areas.
- Use of the existing driveway connecting to Warrah Ridge Road.
- A security gate, biosecurity wheel spray and mortality cold storage container.
- Stormwater swales discharging to a stormwater retention dam.
- Vegetated Environmental Barriers planted at the shed ends.
- Two manager's residences with garages.
- Onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic) for managers residences and staff amenities.
- Two Diesel generators for back-up power supply.
- A ~1800kW solar tracking system and associated battery energy storage system for electricity production

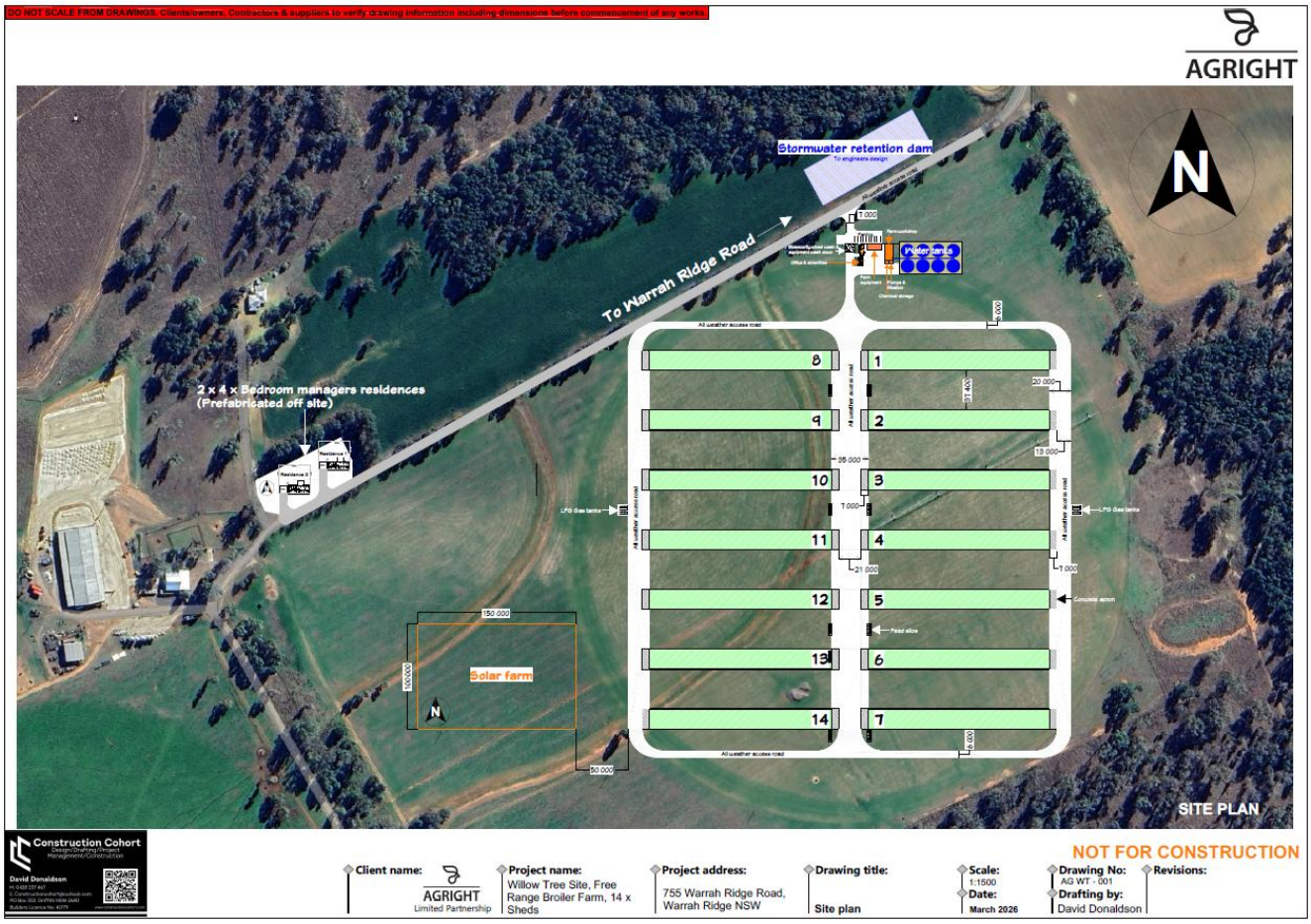


Figure 11: Site Plan (Construction Cohort, 2026)

3.2 PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN

3.2.1 Physical Works

As noted above, the Willow Tree Farm will be comprised of fourteen (14) poultry sheds where free range meat chicken (broilers) will be grown for human consumption. Each shed will accommodate a maximum of 57,900 birds giving the farm a maximum of capacity of 810,600 birds.

The proposed 172m x 18.7m (3,216.4m^2) will be constructed in two rows running north-south across the site (refer to **Figure 12**). 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 free range areas are located adjoining and between the sheds.

The poultry farm will be primarily constructed of steel portal frame steel on a concrete slab with PIR panel cladding and a Colourbond ceiling and roof. 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 buildings are to be constructed with zincalume (or similar) roofs and pale eucalypt colour walls.

Track manoeuvring areas will be constructed using compacted gravel or a sealed running surface as asphalt.

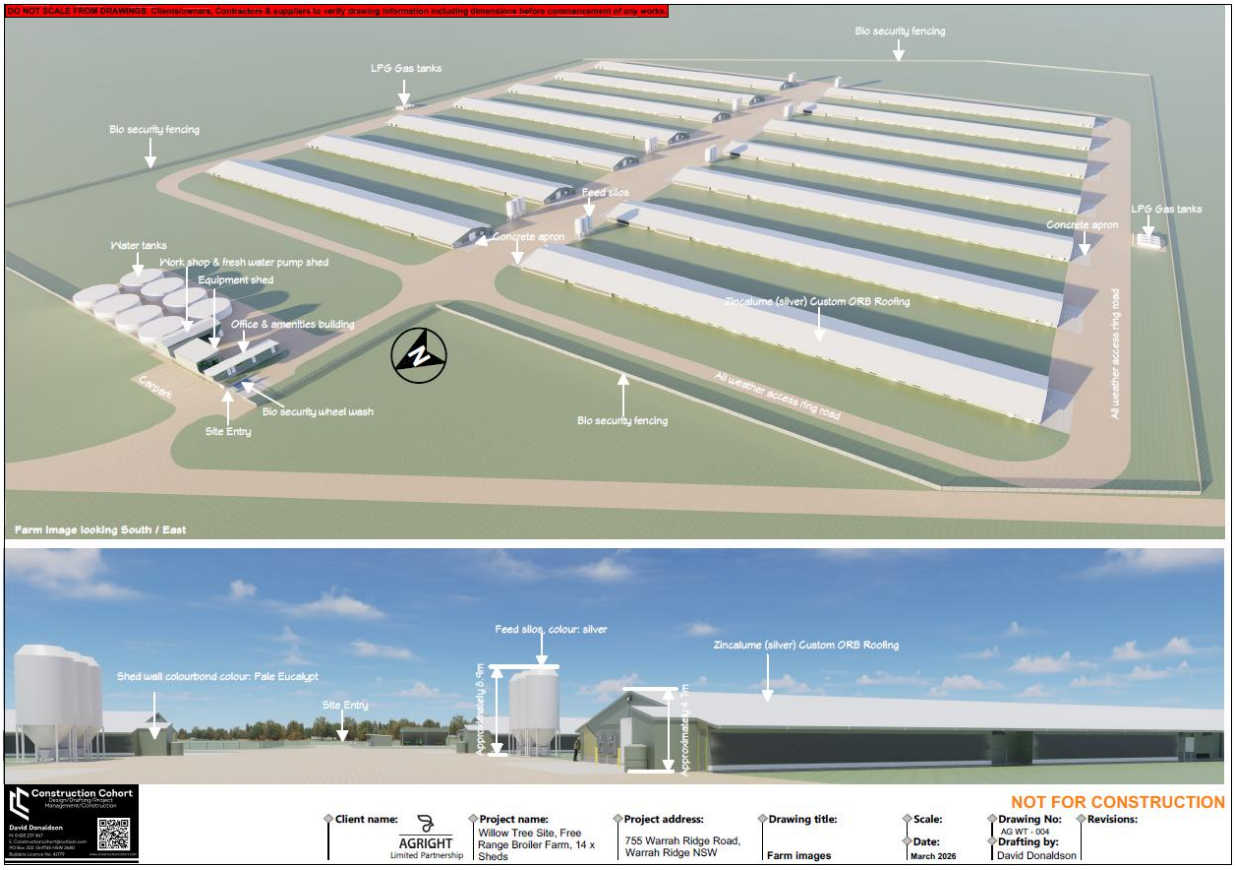


Figure 12: Farm Layout Visualisation (Construction Cohort, 2026)

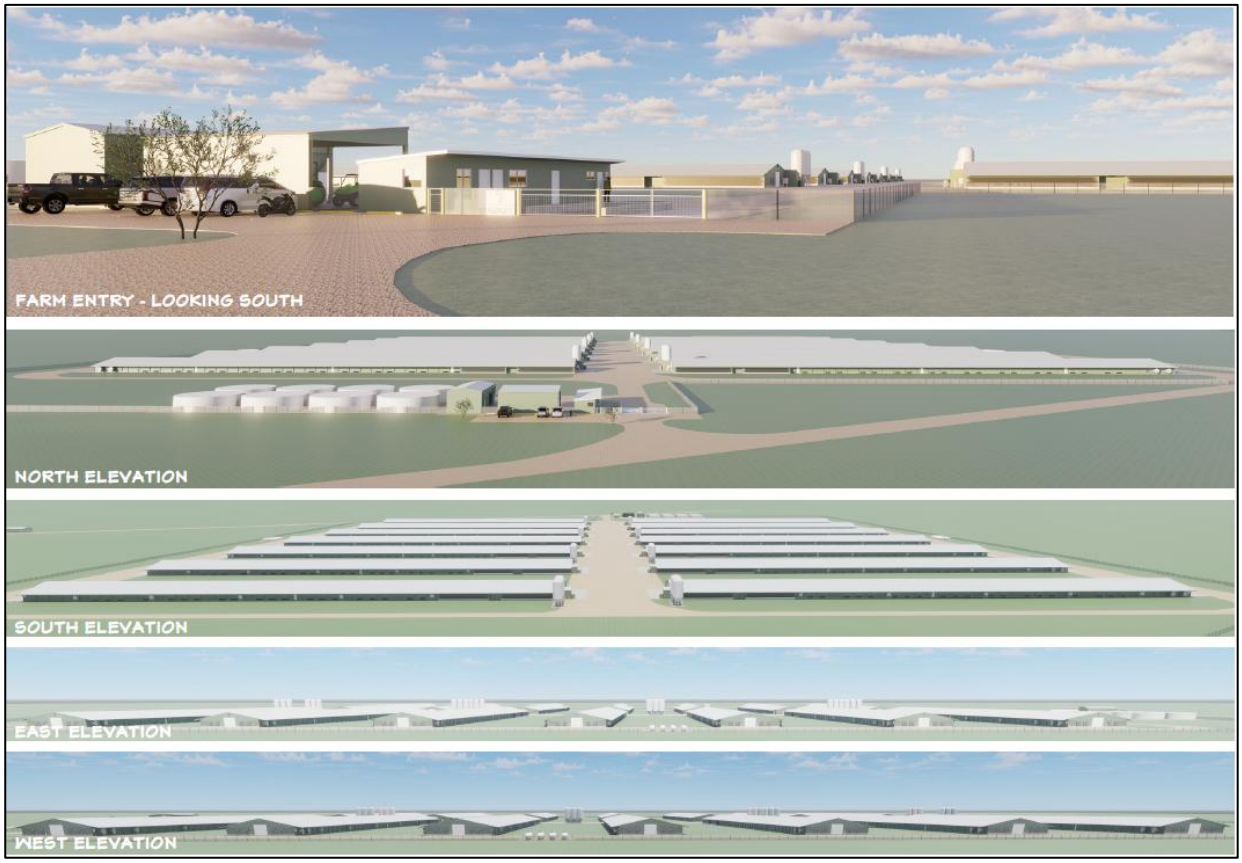


Figure 13: Willow Tree Broiler Farm Elevations (Construction Cohort, 2026)

3.2.2 Earthworks

As noted above, the land on which the farm is to be constructed is flat and has a slight fall from East to West from ~360m AHD to 350m AHD at a slope of less than 2%. As such, only minor earthworks are required to facilitate construction of the poultry sheds and ancillary buildings, internal road works and stormwater swales and basins. As documented in **Appendix 9**, the approach to earthworks will involve balance cut and fill across to the site to create a level and elevated building pad, with site won fill excavated from the drainage swales and retention basin used for the construction areas.

3.2.3 Landscape Buffers

The proposed poultry broiler farm footprint is setback approximately 820m west from the nearest public road frontage (Warrah Ridge Road). The project site is well screened on all sides from a visual perspective by existing corridors of mature native vegetation (refer to **Figure 14**). The proposed poultry sheds and associated infrastructure will not be visually discernible from nearby public roads or sensitive receptors and therefore additional landscaping is not proposed. All existing vegetation framing the site will be retained.

Figure 14: Existing Landscape Buffers (Google Earth, 2026)

In accordance with the recommendations of the Air Quality Report, Vegetated Environmental Barriers consisting of 3 rows of planting will be installed at the fan ends of the sheds which will assist in further minimising the risk of odour emissions and providing additional screening.

3.2.4 Stormwater Management

Stormwater from within this production area will be contained and controlled via swale drains between sheds and around the perimeter of the production area. These swales will ultimately fall into a stormwater retention basin located to the north of the production area.

A single retention basin is proposed, sized to capture and store the full 1% AEP, 72-hour storm event volume. This represents the maximum practical design requirement for the site and ensures that all stormwater is retained internally during extreme rainfall events. By providing total capture of the 1% AEP event, the system prevents uncontrolled discharge from the operational area and supports a closed-loop water management arrangement. Given the adoption of a complete retention-based system, no increase in peak discharge rates from the operational catchment is expected under post-development conditions. As the design prevents any operational stormwater outflow, the development will not contribute additional runoff to the downstream waterway during major storm events.

3.2.5 Managers Residences

The farm will be overseen by 2 on-site managers who will reside on site within the proposed managers dwellings. In accordance with bio-security and animal welfare considerations, the proposed farm requires oversight from at least 1 manager at all times. The provision of on-site accommodation provides sufficient flexibility for the staff and their families to undertake day to day activities and take annual leave, while ensuring operational oversight is retained at all times.

Consistent with the current approvals, the dwellings will only be occupied by persons employed by the Applicant, their partner and dependants in conjunction with the operation of a poultry farm for the operational life of the development and shall not be occupied or let for any other purpose.

The proposed dwellings will be installed in accordance with The *Local Government (Manufactured Home Estates, Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings) Regulation 2005*, will be provided with a 20,000L rain water tank and an on-site septic system (1 per dwelling). The Applicant will be required to obtain approval from Council under Section 68 of the *Local Government Act 1993* for the installation of the farm manager accommodation and on-site waste water treatment plants.

3.3 USES AND ACTIVITIES

3.3.1 Farm Operations

The proposed poultry farm involves the management of broiler hens specifically for the growth of chicken meat.

Production of broilers occurs in cycles with each production cycle completed over 8 -10 weeks. As such, there is an average of 6 production cycles. The production cycle generally follows the following steps:

- **Placement of day-old chicks:** Day-old broiler 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 broiler sheds, within a smaller, confined area (the "brooding area") and given supplementary heating from gas heaters.
- **Growing:** The broilers will be grown over a period of up to 6 - 8 weeks within the proposed broiler sheds. During this time, the broilers are able to move freely within the broiler sheds and are provided with access to drinking water and broiler feed. From approximately 21 days of age, the birds will be provided access to the free range areas located between the sheds.
- **Harvesting:** The broilers 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 consider variations in each of these factors. For the purpose of this EIS a typical 65 day batch regime has been considered which includes a 55 day grow out with 25% of broilers removed at day 32, a further 25% of broilers removed at day 38, and a third thin of 25% of broilers on day 44, with all broilers gone by day 55. A cleanout period of 10 days is also anticipated.

The broilers 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 broiler collection to occur at any time in response to weather conditions (extreme heat / cold), equipment breakdowns and delays in other parts of the broiler hub.

- **Clean Out:** Following the final collection when all broilers have been removed from the broiler sheds, the spent bedding material (broiler litter) will be promptly removed from the broiler sheds by a small front end loader, swept clean and the material transferred into a waiting truck and 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 broiler sheds to dry. Additional activities will include scrubbing feed pans, cleaning out water lines, cleaning the broiler feed silos and scrubbing fan blades and other equipment.
- **Set Up:** Once the broiler 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 broiler sheds. Supporting equipment including feeders, drinking lines, heaters and coolers are then set up ready for placement of a new batch.

All operations at the broiler 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 also be operated in accordance with the conditions of an Environmental Protection License issued by the NSW EPA for the development prior to commencement of operations.

3.3.2 Free Range Areas

As noted above, the poultry farm will operate as a free-range farm whereby once the bird reach approximately 21 days of age, will have access to the free range areas located between the sheds. Every morning, a series of pop hole doors that run lengthwise along both sides of the shed are opened allowing the birds access to the free range area. The birds have constant access to food and water within the shed at all times of the day and night. As the sun goes down, the birds return to the shed on their own accord. The pop hole doors are then closed, enclosing the birds within the shed overnight.

While the Willow Tree Farm will be designed as a free range operation, it retains the capacity to operate as a convention barn shed if required in response to a biosecurity event, or the as requested by the processor.

3.3.3 Hours of Operation

While the majority of on-site activities will occur between 6am and 10pm, all aspects of the proposed poultry farm require the flexibility to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in order to respond to periods of demand. It is noted that collection and transport of live birds may occur during the night when it is cooler and the birds are more settled.

3.3.4 Haulage

The Willow Tree farm will generate approximately 284 heavy vehicle movements per batch (284 incoming trips / 284 outgoing trips), averaging approximately 5 heavy vehicle trips and 3 light vehicle trips per day. Heavy vehicles will mostly be B-Doubles.

A Traffic Impact Assessment has been prepared by PSA Consulting (**Appendix 9**) that demonstrates that the proposed Willow Tree Farm will not result in any unacceptable traffic impacts on the surrounding road network which operates efficiently under both current and future conditions. Appropriate upgrades and design measures have been identified to ensure safe access, compliant manoeuvrability and adequate site functionality.

3.3.5 Employment

At full operation, the poultry farm will be operated by two (2) on-site managers and up to four (4) full time staff. To accommodate the employees onsite an office/staff amenities building is provided as well as new parking spaces. This also includes two (2) managers residences to accommodate the on-site managers.

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.
- Local maintenance contractors including electrician and plumbers, etc.

3.4 INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISIONS AND UPGRADES

3.4.1 Electricity

As noted, the site is not currently serviced by electricity infrastructure capable of delivering the operational loads required for the farm to operate. The applicant is planning to augment Essential Energy's network to secure HV power to the site, and/or supply power using a microgrid comprising a ~1800kW solar farm and associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) arrangement.

Two (2) back up diesel generators are to be provided to power the broiler farm in emergency situations when alternate supply is not available. Approximately 4,000L of diesel fuel is stored on site to enable immediate use of the generators when required.

3.4.2 Gas Supply

Gas is required to provide heating within the broiler sheds during cooler temperatures. There will be a total of eight (8) LPG tanks which have a volume of 5,880 L resulting in a total storage of 47,040 L of LPG at site. Storage of LPG Gas on site exceeds the Screening Thresholds in the Department's Guideline Applying SEPP 33 and accordingly a Preliminary Hazard Assessment (PHA) has been prepared (**Appendix 11**). Based on the analysis conducted, it was concluded that the risks at the site boundary are not considered to exceed the acceptable risk criteria.

3.4.3 Water Supply

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 existing bore (Works Approval 90CA826858) linked to an extraction licence for 240 Units / ML under Water Access Licence (WAL28037) from the New England Fold Belt Mdb Groundwater Source. Water will be pumped from the existing bore, stored in the onsite water storage tanks prior to use on the poultry farm.

Based on farms operating in the New England Region, water demand for broiler farms equates to an average of 13.5 L / Bird / Batch. As the farm has a maximum capacity of 810,600 birds and there are 6 cycles per year the farm can produce up to 4,863,600 birds per year (assuming no mortalities). At 13.5 L per bird, this equates to around 65.66ML per year. As such, the existing WAL has sufficient supply to service the farm and maintain cropping activities on the balance of the site.

3.4.4 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 residence will be treated by an AWTS on-site septic system, which will be installed and operated in accordance with a s68 Approval issued on the *Local Government Act 1993*.

3.5 PROJECT TIMING

The proposed poultry farm does not include any staging of construction, delivery or operation. The poultry farm will have an expected construction period of 9 months and will seek to commence their first poultry cycle as soon as possible following completion of construction. It is expected that the construction of the poultry farm will create approximately 50 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) construction jobs over this 9 month period.

4. STATUTORY CONTEXT

This section identifies 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*
- *Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011*
- *Protection of the Environmental Operations Act 1977*
- *Local Government Act 1993*

4.1 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the development guidelines, the relevant statutory requirements are categorised in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Statutory Requirements

MATTER	GUIDANCE
Power to Grant Consent	***Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*** The proposed development is identified as Designated Development in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 Schedule 3, Item 31: ***31 Livestock processing industry*** *(1) Development for the purposes of livestock processing industry is designated development if it involves the slaughter of animals, including poultry, with an intended processing capacity of more than 750 tonnes per year of live weight.* *(2) Development for the purposes of livestock processing industry that involves the manufacture of products derived from the slaughter of animals is designated development.* *(3) Subsection (2) includes the following-* *a. A tannery of fellmongery with an intended production capacity of more than 2 tonnes per year of products,* *b. A rendering of fat extraction plant with an intended production capacity of more than 200 tonnes per year of tallow, fat or their derivatives or proteinaceous matter,* *c. A plant with an intended production capacity of more than 5,000 tonnes per year of products, including hides, adhesives, pet feed, gelatine, fertiliser or meat products.* *(4) Development for the purposes of livestock processing industry is designated development if it involves-*

	a. The scouring, topping, carbonising or other processing of greasy wool or fleeces, and *b. An intended production capacity of more than 200 tonnes per year.* *(5) Development for the purposes of livestock processing industry is designated development if located –* *a. Within 100 metres of a natural waterbody or wetland, or* *b. In an area a high water table or highly permeable soils or acid sulfate, sodic or saline soils, or* *c. On land that slopes at more than 6 degrees to the horizontal, or* *d. In a drinking water catchment, or* *e. On a floodplain, or* *f. Within 5 kilometres of a residential zone and, in the consent authority's opinion, considering topography and local meteorological conditions, are likely to significantly affect the amenity of the neighbourhood because of noise, odour, dust, lights, traffic or waste.* The proposed poultry farm has a maximum accommodation number of 810,600 and accordingly is classified as Designated Development.
Permissibility	*The **Liverpool Plains Shire 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 include any of the following:* *(a) Dairies (restricted),* *(b) Feedlots,* *(c) Pig farms,* *(d) Poultry farms,* *but does not include extensive agriculture, aquaculture of the operation of facilities for drought or similar emergency relief.* Under the LEP Land Use Table, the development of ***intensive 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 Environmental Operations Act 1977**: Various aspects of the proposed livestock processing activity area classified as Scheduled Activities accordance with Schedule 1, Item 22 of the POEO Act (see below). ***22 Livestock Intensive Activities:*** *This clause applies to the following activities –* ***Bird accommodation,** meaning the accommodation of birds for commercial production.* *Each activity referred to in Column 1 of the Table is this clause is declared to be a scheduled activity if it meets the criteria set out in Column 2 of that Table.*

	<table><tr><th>Column 1</th><th>Column 2</th></tr><tr><td>Activity</td><td>Criteria</td></tr><tr><td>Bird accommodation</td><td>Capacity to accommodate more than 250,000 birds at any time</td></tr></table> As such an Environmental Protection Licence (EPL) will be required to be obtained prior to commencement of operation. The NSW EPA is triggered as an integrated Authority for the Designated Development. **Local Government Act 1993:** The Applicant will be required to obtain approval from Council under section 68 of the *Local Government Act 1993* for the installation of the farm manager accommodation (manufactured dwellings) and on-site waste water treatment plants.
Other Legislation	**Roads Act 1993:** Intersection works for the driveway connecting to Warrah Ridge Road, and upgrade of the Warrah Ridge Merriwa Road intersection will require a s138 approval from Liverpool Plains Regional Council. **EPBC Act 1999:** As a result of historical clearing and existing agricultural and processing activities on the site, it is not expected that the project will have a significant impacts on any Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and as such is unlikely to constitute a controlled action.

4.1.1 State Environmental Planning Policies

The following table identified the applicability and implications of the SEPPs on the project.

Table 5: SEPP Applicability

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (PLANNING SYSTEMS) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY AND ASSESSMENT**
Chapter 2 - State and Regional Development	N/A. The development is not subject to Chapter 2 as it is not State or Regional Development.
Chapter 3 - Aboriginal Land	N/A. The site is not located on land 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 AND ASSESSMENT**
Chapter 2 - Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas	N/A. Chapter 2 does not apply to the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Area.
Chapter 3 - Koala Habitat Protection 2020	Applicable. Liverpool Plains Shire Council Area is listed in Schedule 1 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2021*.
Chapter 4 - Koala Habitat Protection 2021	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 koala habitat trees are 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 5 – River Murray Lands	N/A. The chapter does not apply to the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Area.
Chapter 6 – Water Catchments	N/A. The site is not located within a nominated water catchment.
Chapter 13 – Strategic Conservation Planning	N/A. The site is not located on the nominated Land Application maps.
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (RESILIENCE AND HAZARDS) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY AND ASSESSMENT**
Chapter 2 - Coastal Management	N/A. The site is not located in the Coastal Zone.
Chapter 3 - Hazardous and Offensive Development	Applicable. 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	Applicable. The site has been historically cleared and used for cropping and as such, is not expected to be at high risk from contamination. The proposed development is a continuation of agricultural use and as such not expected to result the requirements of remediation of land.
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE) 2021	
CHAPTERS	**APPLICABILITY AND ASSESSMENT**
Chapter 2 - Infrastructure	N/A. The proposed development does not trigger assessment under Chapter 2.
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	**APPLICABILITY AND ASSESSMENT**

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

4.1.2 Liverpool Plains Shire Local Environmental Plan 2011

4.1.2.1 Zoning and Permissibility

Under the *Liverpool Plains Shire Local Environmental Plan 2011*, the subject site is located in RU1 Primary Production Zone. The proposed development falls under the Liverpool Plains Shire 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 Liverpool Plains Shire LEP development of an **Intensive Livestock Agriculture** use 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.*

The proposed use of the site is considered to be a complementary land use to the surrounding area and adjoining zones. Further, the development of the poultry farm will support expansion of primary industry enterprises across the 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 complies with the objectives of the zone.

4.1.2.2 LEP Applicable Clauses

The relevant clauses of the Liverpool Plains and where they are addressed are identified in the following table.

Table 6: Liverpool Plains 2011- Applicable Clauses

LEP CLAUSE	ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS AMD RESPONSE	SECTION IN EIS
2.3 Zone Objectives and Land Use Table	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.*	**4.1.2.1**

LEP CLAUSE	ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS AMD RESPONSE	SECTION IN EIS
	• *To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.* • *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.* The proposed development is defined as an **Intensive Livestock Agriculture** and also included with the group definition of **agriculture** which is **permitted with consent** within the RU1 Zone. The proposed use of the site is considered to be a complementary land use to the surrounding area and adjoining zones. Further, the development of the poultry farm will support expansion of primary industry enterprises across the 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 complies with the objectives of the zone.	
5.18 Intensive livestock agriculture	In determining whether or not to grant development consent for intensive livestock agriculture, the consent authority must take the following into consideration the following matters. These matters have been addressed in detail in the EIS and various supporting technical reports.	
	(a) the adequacy of the information provided in the statement of environmental effects or (if the development is designated development) the environmental impact statement accompanying the development application,	The Entire EIS
	(b) the potential for odours to adversely impact on the amenity of residences or other land uses within the vicinity of the site,	**6.5**
	(c) the potential for the pollution of surface water and ground water,	**6.4**
	(d) the potential for the degradation of soils,	**6.4**
	(e) the measures proposed to mitigate any potential adverse impacts,	**7.0**
	(f) the suitability of the site in the circumstances,	**8.6**

LEP CLAUSE	ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS AMD RESPONSE	SECTION IN EIS
	(g) whether the applicant has indicated an intention to comply with relevant industry codes of practice for the health and welfare of animals,	**6.12** **6.13**
	(h) the consistency of the proposal with, and any reasons for departing from, the environmental planning and assessment aspects of any guidelines for the establishment and operation of relevant types of intensive livestock agriculture published, and made available to the consent authority, by the Department of Primary Industries (within the Department of Industry) and approved by the Planning Secretary.	**6.12** **6.13** **6.14**
7.1 Earthworks	In determining whether or not to grant development consent for intensive livestock agriculture, the consent authority must take the following into consideration the following matters. These matters have been addressed in detail in the EIS and supporting technical reports. *(a) the likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, existing drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality of the development,* *(b) the effect of the development on the likely future use or redevelopment of the land,* *(c) the quality of the fill or the soil to be excavated, or both,* *(d) the effect of the development on the existing and likely amenity of adjoining properties,* *(e) the source of any fill material and the destination of any excavated material,* *(f) the likelihood of disturbing relics,* *(g) the proximity to, and potential for adverse impacts on, any waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area,* *(h) any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development*	**3.2.2** **3.2.4** **6.2** **6.4**
7.9 Essential services	The proposed breeder farm will be provided with all necessary supporting infrastructure and services including: (a) the supply of water. (b) the supply of electricity. (c) the disposal and management of sewage and treated effluent (d) stormwater drainage. (e) suitable road access.	**3.4**

4.1.3 Integrated Authorities

The EPA is identified as an Integrated Authority with respect to the proposed development as the proposal involves a Premises Based Activity identified in Section 43 (b) of the *Protection of Environmental Operations Act 1997,* namely *Schedule 1 Item 22 Livestock intensive activities*.

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 17 October 2025. The SEARs were received by the Applicant on 12 November 2025 and a response to the SEARS is included as **Appendix 2**.

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 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 17 October 2025) 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 3 March 2026:
  - Department of Primary Industries
  - Transport for NSW
  - NSW Rural Fire Service
  - WaterNSW
  - Nungaroo Local Aboriginal Land Council
  - Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Responses from the above agencies were received as follows:

- The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development provided general information on 4 March 2026 via a link to https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry/meat/poultry-producers-farms. The link provides details as to requirements for poultry meat farms from licensing , skills and knowledge, construction, hygiene, animal welfare, food safety management, testing, labelling, inspections, legislation and standards. **Sections 6.13 – 6.15** supported by **Appendix 14 – 17** address these relevant matters.
- Transport for NSW provided relevant information requirements on 12 March 2026. TfNSW requested that a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) be prepared by a suitably qualified person in accordance with the TfNSW Guide to Transport Impact Assessment, 2024, Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 12 and the complementary TfNSW Supplement. A TIA has been prepared as requested, in accordance with the requirements (**Appendix 9).**
- WaterNSW provided relevant information requirements on 17 March 2026 including a recommendation for the EIS to address:

- Access to surface and groundwater resources (Section 2.5.2, Section 6.4)
- Impacts to surface and groundwater resources (Section 6.4)
- Flooding (Section 2.5.3, Section 6.4)

- Liverpool Plains Shire Council provided a response on 2 March 2026 requesting that the application identifies any potential contamination of the site . A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Database has confirmed that the site is not listed as a contaminated land. Contamination has been addressed in Section 6.3 of the EIS.
- No responses were received from the other agencies.

The request from the above agencies, have been included in the response to SEARS and Agency Requests included as **Appendix 2**. Relevant feedback provided by the above agencies was incorporated into the EIS.

5.1.2 Community Consultation

The SEARs included the requirement for the applicant to undertake community and stakeholder engagement including with *surrounding occupiers and landowners that may be impacted by the proposal*. An overview of activities undertaken and responses provided is provided below.

5.1.2.1 Community Consultation Activities

Community consultations 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 7** outlines the communication and engagement activities undertaken by Agright in order to consult with the neighbouring residents and business owners and broader community.

Table 7: Community Consultation Activities

ACTIVITY / TOOL	TIMING
A letter was sent to the immediate neighbours on 9 March 2026. The material provided project information, contact details and requested that feedback be supplied directly to the project team.	09 March 2026
Agright monitored of the consultation phone number and email for feedback.	09 – 27 March 2026

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 8**).

Table 8: Community Responses

DATE	STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK	RESPONSE AND INFLUENCE ON EIS
18 March 2026	A group of surrounding landholders, farmer operators and residents adjacent to the proposed development sent a combined objection letter to the proposed development via Doyle Wilson Solicitors. The objectors cited concerns regarding potential for negative impacts to their properties, amenity and the environment of	Agright provided a written response to the objection letter on 20 March 2025. The concerns were acknowledged in the letter. It was made clear that the issues raised in the correspondence were all matters that are already being comprehensively assessed as part of the EIS being prepared for the project by a range of suitably qualified specialists.

	surrounding land in general. They submission cited the following factors: • Odour. • Dust/air pollution. • Adverse effects on water drainage and ground water. • Noise. • Traffic. • Biosecurity.	The response letter also welcomed the opportunity for objectors to meet with the project team at a mutually convenient time to discuss the proposal in more detail and address any specific questions or concerns. Contact details were provided to enable such a meeting to be arranged; however, no requests were received.

5.2.2 Community Consultation Outcomes

In summarising the findings of the community engagement, the surrounding residents have raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed farm on the surrounding properties and the environment. These concerns raised by the neighbouring stakeholders have been addressed as part of the project design and in the technical investigations undertaken to inform this EIS.

5.3 ENGAGEMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT

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

5.3.1 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 (Liverpool Plains Council) in relation to the proposed development. Advertising will occur for a minimum period of 28 days.

5.3.2 Engagement Activities for Construction and Operational Phases

5.3.2.1 Construction

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.

Agright 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.

5.3.2.2 Operational Phase

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

6. ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION OF IMPACTS

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

6.1 BIODIVERSITY

As request in the SEARS, Wildthing Environment Consultant was engaged to undertake an Ecological Assessment (included as **Appendix 5**) to assess the potential biodiversity impacts of the project and relevant statutory considerations including:

- *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment 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 Environmental 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.

In this regard, no areas of land category within the meaning of Part 5A of LLS Act were mapped within the subject site or impact areas on the Transitional Vegetation Regulatory Map. The draft NVR map shows the site is classified as Category 1 Exempt Land. An area of Category 2 Regulated Land was present along the existing access road from Warrah Ridge Road which mirrors the trees planted alongside the road. Additional areas of Category 2 Regulated Land were present to the south, east and north of the impact area which were areas of remnant native vegetation. None of these trees or areas of remnant native vegetation are required to be impacted as part of the proposal.

As the impact area wholly 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 the preparation of a BDAR, the prescribed impacts as outlined in Chapter 6 of the BAM (2020) must still be considered, and have therefore been addressed in the Ecological Assessment.

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 agricultural activities with some smaller areas of native remnant woodland present in the surrounding area.

On site vegetation surveys of the broader property determined that the site contains one Plant Community Type detailed in the NSW Vegetation Information System (VIS) classification database; PCT 437 - Yellow Box grassy woodland on lower hillslopes and valley flats in the southern NSW Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. Within the NSW BC Act 2016, Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC), PCT 437 is consistent with White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland. Whilst these PCT's were noted on the broader site, the impact area was not identified as containing native vegetation.

A map of the vegetation assemblages within the subject land is shown in **Figure 15**. As shown, the majority of the proposal has been positioned within a highly modified Cropping Areas in the centre of the study area. The existing access has been maintained with the access to the farm not requiring any further vegetation clearing.

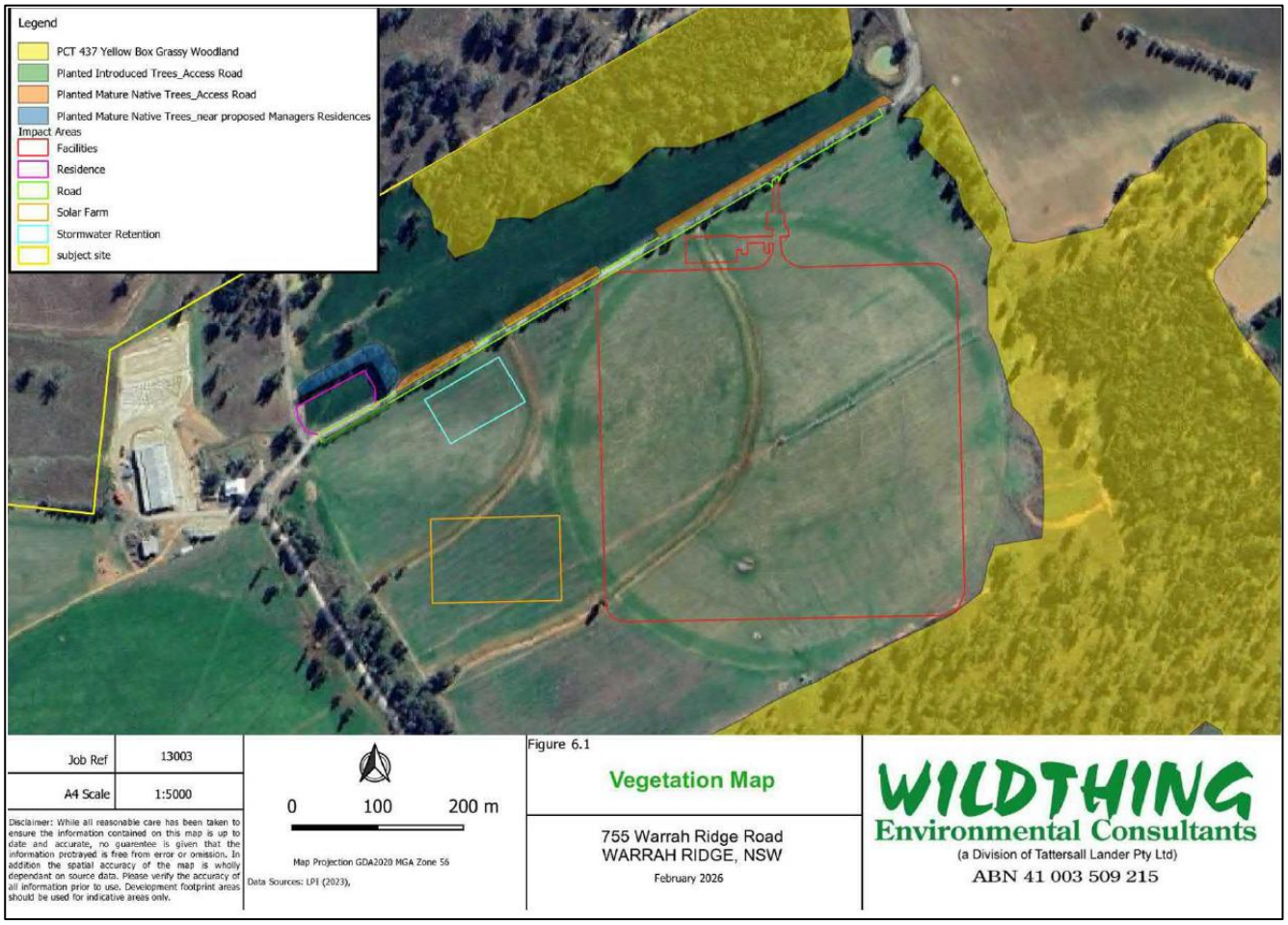


Figure 15: Vegetation Map (Wildthing, 2024)

6.1.2 Matters of Ecological Significance

No threatened ecological communities were observed or are likely to be present within the subject land. A total of Eighteen threatened ecological communities (TECs) have been recorded within the region according to both the BioNet (DPE, 2023) and PMST databases.

No threatened flora species were recorded during fieldwork within the impact area or subject site (Wildthing Environmental Consultants) with assessments indicating that due to the high disturbance, no suitable habitat was found to be present and considered unlikely to significantly the life cycle of any threatened flora species or place any viable local populations of at risk of extinction.

No threatened fauna species were recorded during fieldwork. Of the threatened fauna species addressed those most likely to utilise the impact area would include some birds of prey and microchiropteran bats for hunting. Given the small impact it is unlikely that the proposal will have a significant impact on the addressed threatened fauna species such that a local extinction would occur.

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".

Considerations Under *SEPP (Biodiversity Conservation) 2021*, Chapter 3 Koala Habitat Protection, found whilst potential Koala Habitat was present within the broader area, the study area was unlikely to be Core 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 proposal will result in the following direct and potential impacts/losses:

- Removal of a combined 20.56ha area which has been historically cleared and is currently used for cropping; and
- Removal of potential habitat for addressed threatened species that utilise open disturbed habitats.

The Ecological Assessment concludes that the impact of the project is a small incremental modification of habitat for a number of threatened species, however, given the relatively small size of the impact, current disturbance and mitigation measures the proposal is unlikely to significantly impact any addressed threatened species or community.

Mitigation measures outlined below will be included as part of the construction and operation phase 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:

- Erosion and sedimentation;
- Increased spread of priority and other weed species;
- Edge effects impacting areas of native vegetation;
- Increase in artificial light;
- Increase in native fauna vehicle strike;
- Dust Generation; and
- Increase in noise.

6.1.6 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures have been recommended by Wildthing and will be implemented into the proposed development.

Trees and other Native Vegetation

Where possible, works should minimise any impact to native vegetation outside the scope of the proposal, including avoiding the critical root zone of remnant trees when trenching cables and constructing roadways. Where unavoidable, works should minimise impacts to trees as follows:

- The clearance boundary is to be clearly marked with flagging tape;
- all material stockpiles, vehicle parking and machinery storage will be located within cleared areas, and not in areas of native vegetation.

Transport of weeds and pathogens from the impact area to adjacent vegetation

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
- It is recommended that all Priority Weeds within the impact area be controlled as part of routine property maintenance. Particular attention should be given to the weeds listed in Table 6.1 of this report.
- All machinery and equipment are to be inspected for weeds and weed propagules prior to going on site to prevent the introduction of new weed species to the area.

Reduce impacts of artificial lighting

Artificial light is known to adversely affect many species and can change behaviour and/or physiology, reducing survivorship or reproductive output (DoEE, 2020). It can also have the indirect effect of changing the availability of habitat or food resources. It can also attract predators and invasive pests, both of which may pose a threat to listed species. Each outdoor light fixture will be designed to be aimed downwards to reduce light spill into areas of native vegetation. Lights will only be used when necessary, during times of low light and/or heavy fog.

Vehicle strike

Vehicles on all internal roads must comply to the reduced speed limit of 40km/h. Signage is to be erected at the entrance to the development to inform drivers of the reduced speed limit and to look out for wildlife. All vehicles are to be confined to internal road network to protect native flora and fauna. All personal should be warned of this via inductions.

Noise

Noise from the movement of light and heavy vehicles, use of plant and equipment and fans and ventilation stacks may impact acoustic amenity in the locality. The noise levels generated by the Development will not cause any impact or disturbance to local fauna species.

Dust Generation

Dust can be generated during construction of the poultry sheds, associated infrastructure and upgrade of internal roads. Dust has the potential to cover the nearby native vegetation potentially affecting plant growth. If dust levels become too high as a result of construction a water truck may be required to be used to reduce levels. Dust emissions from the upgraded internal access roads are not likely to be significant due to a lower silt loading on the constructed road surface. It is expected that dust levels on the Development Site will be below any levels that would affect flora and fauna species. During construction, the applicant will ensure that:

- exposed surfaces and stockpiles are suppressed by regular watering or equivalent as required to prevent a dust nuisance occurring;
- all trucks entering and exiting the site with loads have their loads covered;
- trucks associated with the development do not track dirt onto the public road network;
- public roads used by these trucks are kept clean; and
- any land stabilisation works are carried out progressively on site to minimise exposed surfaces.

6.2 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

6.2.1 Assessment Results

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) was engaged to undertake an Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment for the proposed development which is included as **Appendix 6**. 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 grinding groove located 7.5 km to the northeast (AHIMS# 29-5-004). In addition, there are no perennial waterways in the study area and very little remnant mature vegetation, the presence of these site types is considered unlikely.

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; 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.

6.2.2 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 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 Project 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* should be followed.
- Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the NPW Act 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.

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 1964 and has 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 of contamination and is suitable for construction of the proposed poultry farm.

6.4 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater management has been addressed in the Civil Design Memo prepared by Agright as is included as **Appendix 8.**

6.4.1 Stormwater Quantity

Stormwater from within this production area will be contained and controlled via swale drains between sheds and around the perimeter of the production area. These swales will ultimately fall into a stormwater retention basin located to the north of the production area.

A single retention basin (turkey nest dam) is proposed, sized to capture and store the full 1% AEP, 72-hour storm event volume. This represents the maximum practical design requirement for the site and ensures that all stormwater is retained internally during extreme rainfall events. By providing total capture of the 1% AEP event, the system prevents uncontrolled discharge from the operational area and supports a closed-loop water management arrangement. Given the adoption of a complete retention-based system, no increase in peak discharge rates from the operational catchment is expected under post-development conditions. As the design prevents any operational stormwater outflow, the development will not contribute additional runoff to the downstream waterway during major storm events.

6.4.2 Stormwater Quality

All sheds are constructed on an elevated pad and concrete slab and insulated panel wall. As such internal shed areas are separated from interaction with stormwater or roof water. Rainfall runoff from the shed roofs and free range areas will be directed into the grassed swales running between the broiler sheds and discharged into the external proposed retention basin. A small amount of washdown water created by the external washing of the broiler sheds with a high-pressure hose is 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 200 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.

With respect to the nutrient deposits within the range areas, research undertaken the Australian Government - Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation in 2015 and published in *Free range chickens—odour emissions and nutrient management, RIRDC 2015* indicates that the runoff from free range areas would generate less load on the environment than, for example, a commercial golf course; and that the nutrients that accumulated in the soil of the range areas were at concentrations comparable to areas where the birds do not access

As such, the proposed swales between the sheds as well as the detention basin are expected to provide sufficient water quality treatment to the potential pollutant loads associate with the farm operations. In addition, it is also important to note that the broiler farm is to be constructed on land historically used for cropping activities (e.g. lucerne production) with the associated cultivation, chemical and fertilizer use. Accordingly, the water quality of stormwater discharged from the broiler farm, is expected to be comparable to or better than the existing cultivation areas.

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 broiler farm will pose a minimal risk with respect to stormwater quality.

It is therefore considered that the potential for impacts from the broiler 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 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures have been recommended:

- Design and construct the stormwater management systems as documented in the Civil Design Memo prepared by Agright and included as **Appendix 8**.
- Vegetation and grass coverage within the range areas is to be managed and maintained in general accordance with the requirements of the FREEPA Chicken Meat Standards 2023.

6.5 AIR QUALITY

An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Astute Environmental to assess the potential impact of the development in terms of odour and dust. The assessment is included in **Appendix 12.**

6.5.1 Modelling Methodology

Modelling methodology for the air quality assessment employed the Approved Methods for Modelling referred to in:

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

Meteorological Modelling has been undertaken using TAPM (Version 4) and CALMET software. Dispersion modelling has been undertaken using CALPUFF.

The odour emissions model of Ormerod and Holmes (2005) was used as the basis of this assessment. The methodology is referred to in the *Best Practice Guidance for the Queensland Poultry Industry - Plume Dispersion Modelling and Meteorological Processing* (PAEHolmes, 2011) and also the *Planning and environment guideline for establishing meat chicken farms, Guide 1 Assessment guide* (McGahan, et al., 2021) (the National Guidelines). The method is based on odour test data at a number of farms and uses a series of equations, which enable emissions to be predicted as a function of:

- the size and number of birds present;
- the stocking density of birds; and
- the ventilation rate, which varies by bird age and ambient temperature.

The K factor is a scaling factor which is used to reflect the performance of a farm. For the proposed farm we have used a K factor of 1.9 which is recognised as an upper range of those that occur at modern farms and therefore acts as a degree of additional conservatism which is innate within the model. For comparison, the applicant has previously cited sampling from modern broiler sheds within the Riverina Region of NSW demonstrating typical K-factors of <1.

6.5.2 Meteorological Data

As requested in the SEARS, a weather station was installed on site on or about 6 December 2025 by Environdata. The station measures wind speed and direction using a Vaisala WXT530 Wind Cap ultrasonic sensor. The weather station meets the requirements of NSW EPA (2022).

As the station was installed in early December and TAPM data is only available to the end of December 2025, only a short validation period of has been performed at this point in time. We note that on a 10-minute average between the install date and early January 2026, average winds between 0.2 m/s and 12 m/s have been measured.

As TAPM synoptic data for 2026 has not been released, Astute have not been able to perform a validation from December 2025 to date which would enable the SEARs requirement of at least 3 months to be met. However, it is noted that previous validations of TAPM against observed data at Rushes Creek and the AAM Bective site (provided to the EPA) has shown a good agreement between the modelled and observed data using the standard benchmarks in USEPA (2020). Astute therefor expect that the same performance will occur in this instance.

6.5.3 Sensitive Receptors

The yellow markers in **Figure 12** show nearby sensitive receptors for the purpose of the assessment.

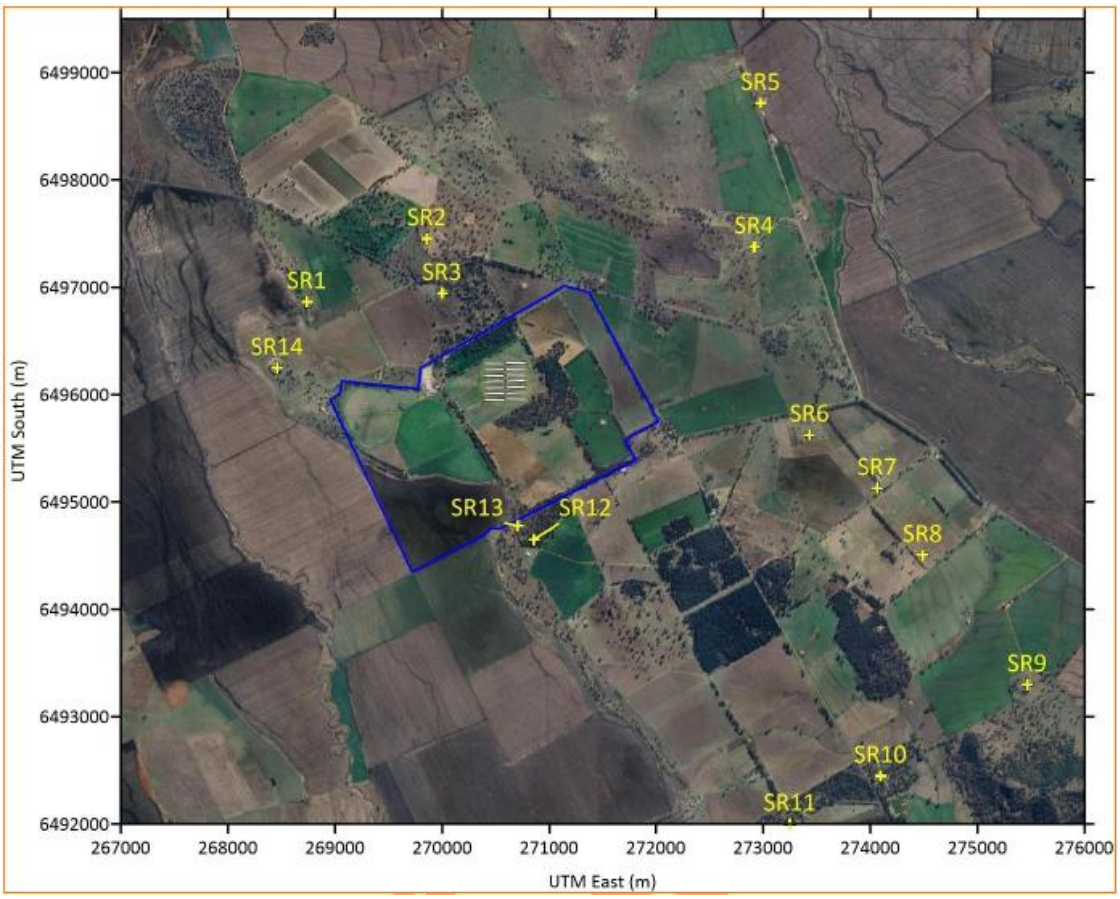


Figure 16: Sensitive receptors (Astute Environmental Consulting, 2026)

6.5.4 Air Quality Assessment Results

6.5.4.1 Odour Assessment Criteria

Whilst no specific guidance is provided in the Approved Methods, the approach often required by the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) for setting the odour criterion for a site is as follows:

- Model the site using standard methods (i.e. the site as proposed);

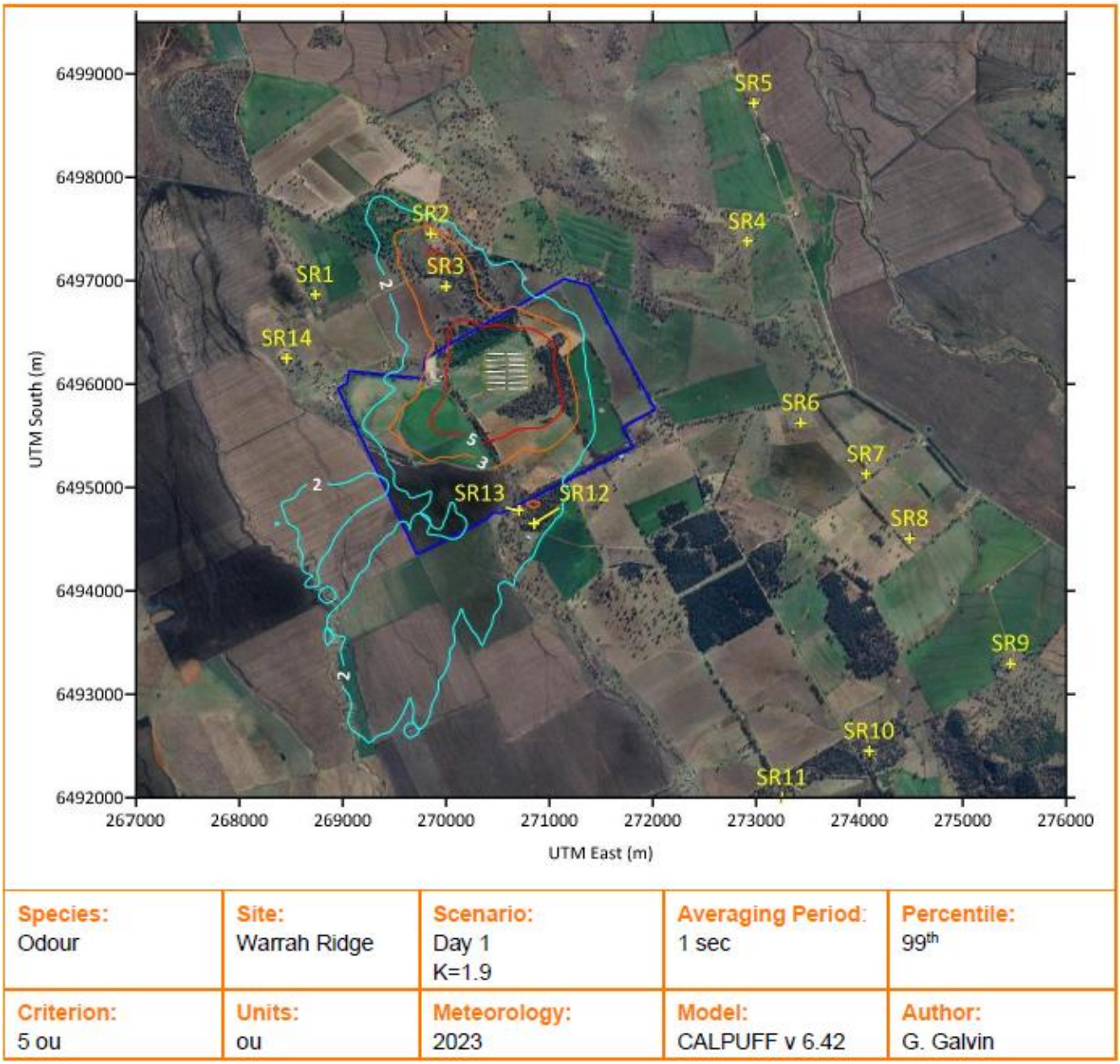
- Prepare a contour plot showing the C99 1sec = 2 ou contour;
- count the existing houses/dwellings within the 2 ou contour (and also consider any proposed dwellings within the 2 ou contour);
- determine the average population per dwelling based on the average data from the most recent Census data; and
- determine the total population and then determine the criterion to be used based on Equation 7.2 in the Approved Methods.

The 2 ou contour for the project picks up 4 rural dwellings and utilising a 2.4 people per dwelling (as per the 2021 Census), the relevant odour assessment criterion for the farm is therefore 6 ou. For the purposes of this report, we have adopted 5 ou as the criterion to provide a degree of conservatism to the assessment.

6.5.4.2 Odour Modelling Results

The modelling presented in the Air Quality Assessment Report considers the proposed operation and has been performed in accordance with the Approved Methods having regard to the SEARs requirements. Modelling of 3 alternate placement schedules (starting Day 1, 14 and 28) have also been undertaken to ensure peak emissions across all weather conditions.

The modelling undertaken indicates that the proposed development would not lead to any exceedances of the odour criterion (5 ou) at the nearest sensitive locations under any of the placement schedules. The extent of the 5 ou contour (Placement Day 1) is shown in **Figure 17**. As shown in **Table 9**, the maximum concentration of the odour emissions at the nearest sensitive receptors (SR2) was 4.4 ou which is 12% under the 5 ou criteria.



Species:	Site:	Scenario:	Averaging Period:	Percentile:
Odour	Warrah Ridge	Day 1 K=1.9	1 sec	99th
Criterion:	**Units:**	**Meteorology:**	**Model:**	**Author:**
5 ou	ou	2023	CALPUFF v 6.42	G. Galvin

Figure 17: Odour Contour - Farm Placement Day 1 (Astute, 2026)

Receptor	24-hour Maximum Concentration – Isolation (µg/m^3)			Annual Average Concentration – Isolation (µg/m^3)		
	Day 1	Day 14	Day 28	Day 1	Day 14	Day 28
SR1	3.3	1.1	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
SR2	5.5	6.0	4.1	0.3	0.3	0.3
SR3	5.5	5.4	4.7	0.4	0.4	0.4
SR4	1.7	1.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR5	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR6	1.1	0.9	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR7	1.1	1.3	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR8	0.8	1.4	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR9	1.1	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR10	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR11	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
SR12	2.7	2.7	3.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
SR13	2.9	3.1	4.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
SR14	3.5	1.4	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.1

Table 9: Odour Concentration Receptor Results – Day 1 to 28 Placement (Astute, 2026)

6.5.4.3 Particulate Matter Modelling Results

The predicted ground level concentrations of PM10 for both the maximum 24-hour and annual average are presented below. Note that the background concentration for the 24 hour average concentration is higher than the 50 µg/m^3 limit at 66.6 µg/m^3, and the highest background not above 50 µg/m^3 is 49.4. Astute notes that this unduly impacts the extent of the 50 µg/m3 contour modelled.

The results from modelling of dust show:

- The maximum predicted 24-hour concentration in isolation for all sensitive receptors was 6.0 µg/m^3 at SR 2 for Day 14;
- The cumulative 24-hour PM10 assessment which includes the particulate emissions from the sheds, there were additional days above the 50 go/m^3 criterion because of the high (49.4 µg/m^3) background;
- Cumulative annual average predictions including background and particulate emissions from the shed are predicted to be in compliance with the impact assessment criteria for the majority of sensitive receptors; and
- For the annual average, no receptors are above the criterion.

Due to the high background, Astute contemporaneously assessed the hourly PM10 concentrations in line with the Approved Methods. When assessed contemporaneously there are no exceedances of the 24 hour PM10 criterion due to operations of the farm.

6.5.5 Mitigation Measures

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

Construction

To ensure continual compliance and reduce the risk of dust nuisance, we recommend ongoing management which should consist of:

- minimising disturbed areas.
- treating any long-term stockpiles to minimise dust emissions.
- road management"
  - treatment of the external road surface used by heavy vehicles to stabilise the roads.
  - watering of the roads and/or open areas to reduce dust emissions as required.
- limiting vehicle speeds during conditions where dust emissions have the potential to be higher than normal due to dry or windy conditions.
- revegetating disturbed areas around the site which are not required for vehicle traffic or operations.

Odour

- Vegetative buffers should be planted and maintained around the sheds 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 from the ground level fans, which reduces dust impacts via dust deposition and also assists in odour dispersion.
- The 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 from entering the sheds and to allow for the controlled discharge of washdown water during cleaning. These measures will reduce the moisture level within the poultry sheds associated with rainfall, helping to keep litter moisture low and subsequently reducing 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 prevent rainwater entry, as wet feed can be a potential odour source.
- The maximum stocking densities will be complied with.
- Regular monitoring and maintenance of the tunnel ventilation systems and bird drinkers will be performed 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 litter will occur to identify, remove and replace any caked material beneath drinking lines and/or areas with excessive moisture content.
- Spent 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. Handling of the material will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions, such as cold air drainage in the early morning or at night and during strong winds, wherever possible.
- 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 the enclosed on-site dead bird facility 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

- Vegetative buffers should be planted and maintained around the sheds 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 from the ground level fans, which reduces dust impacts via dust deposition.
- The feed silos will be fully enclosed to minimise emissions of particulate matter when loading/unloading.

- 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 sheds will be thoroughly cleaned between batches, with a focus on the fan end of the sheds.
- The generators are mounted appropriately with a vertical air discharge.
- Where possible, the handling of bedding material and litter will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions.
- 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 and Vibration Assessment has been undertaken by SoundIn to undertake a noise and vibration impact assessment for a proposed farm and is included as **Appendix 13**. The report presents an assessment of potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the construction and operation of the project at nearby sensitive receivers and has been conducted in general accordance with the following NSW Government guidelines and policies:

- *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (DECC, 2009).
- *Noise Policy for Industry* (EPA, 2017).
- *NSW Road Noise Policy* (DECCW, 2011).

6.6.1 Existing Acoustic Environment

The land uses surrounding the Site are rural. The nearest and most potentially affected sensitive receivers are several isolated rural dwellings. Several receivers have been identified for assessment purposes, as identified in **Figure 18**.

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 18: Proposal Site and Sensitive Receivers (SoundIn, 2026)

6.6.2 Assessment Results

6.6.2.1 Predicted Construction Noise Levels

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 10**. The results indicate that construction noise levels are predicted to comply with the 45 dBA Noise Management Level (NML) at all sensitive receptors.

Table 10: Predicted Construction Noise Levels (SoundIn, 2026)

Receiver	Predicted Construction $L_{Aeq,15min}$ Noise Levels (dBA)			NML	Exceedance (dBA)
	S1	S2	S3		
R1	42 - 42	39 - 39	36 - 37	45	-
R2	32 - 33	29 - 30	26 - 28	45	-
R3	<20 - 21	<20	<20	45	-
R4	23 - 25	20 - 22	<20 - 20	45	-
R5	32 - 34	28 - 29	25 - 27	45	-
R6	22 - 24	21 - 21	<20	45	-
R7	<20	<20	<20	45	-
R8	32 - 32	26 - 28	23 - 26	45	-

6.6.2.2 Predicted Operational Noise Levels

Noise impacts associated with the operation of the Proposal have been assessed in general accordance with the NPfI. The NPfI recommends the development of project noise trigger levels, which provide a benchmark for assessing a proposal or site. The project noise trigger levels should not be interpreted as mandatory noise criteria but, rather, as noise levels that, if exceeded, would indicate a potential noise impact on the community.

Separate project intrusiveness noise levels and project amenity noise levels for sensitive receivers have been identified for the project and the project noise trigger levels (PNTL), are the lower of the determined values. For this project, the following PNTL (LAeq,15min (dBA)) have been identified:

- Day (7am – 6pm): 40 dBA.
- Evening (6pm – 10pm): 35 dBA.
- Night (10pm – 7am) 40 dBA.

Operational noise emissions from the Proposal have been modelled using SoundPLAN v9.0, 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. Two scenarios have been developed to represent typical worst-case operational noise emissions from the proposed farm during daytime and evening/night time periods.

The predicted LAeq,15min noise levels at nearby residential receivers associated with the worst case scenarios are presented in **Table 11**. As shown, the modelling indicates that the predicted wort case noise levels at all nearby receivers comply with the noise trigger levels at all times, including calm and adverse weather conditions.

Table 11: Predicted operational Noise Levels - LAeq,15min (SoundIn, 2026)

Receiver	Predicted $L_{Aeq,15min}$ noise level (dBA)						Project noise trigger level (dBA)			Complies?
	Day		Evening		Night		Day	Evening	Night	
	Calm	NE	Calm	NE	Calm	NE				
R1	34	38	30	35	31	35	40	35	35	Yes
R2	28	33	24	29	24	29	40	35	35	Yes
R3	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	40	35	35	Yes
R4	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	40	35	35	Yes
R5	26	31	22	28	23	28	40	35	35	Yes
R6	<20	22	<20	<20	<20	<20	40	35	35	Yes
R7	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	40	35	35	Yes
R8	22	28	<20	24	<20	24	40	35	35	Yes

6.6.2.3 Predicted Road Noise Levels

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 Willow Tree Poultry Farm. This assessment us attached as **Appendix 9**. 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 Conditions

The site is accessed by a range of classes of roads. ***Figure 19*** and ***Figure 20*** illustrates the road network and hierarchy in the vicinity of the site.

Figure 19: Road Hierarchy (PSA Consulting, 2026)

Figure 20: Road Hierarchy (PSA Consulting, 2026)

Within this hierarchy of roads, the speed limit and cross sections have been summarised in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Road Hierarchy Detail (Source TfNSW)

ROAD NAME	JURISDICTION	CLASSIFICATION / HIERARAHY	CROSS SECTION/ GEOMETRY	SPEED LIMIT
Warrah Ridge Road	Council-Controlled	Local Road	Sealed, Two-way / Two-Lane undivided Carriageway	100 km/h
Merriwa Road	Council-Controlled	Regional Road	Sealed, Two-way / Two-Lane divided Carriageway	100 km/h
New England Highway	State-Controlled	State Road	Sealed, Two-way / Two-Lane divided Carriageway	50 km/h

The site and surrounding road network are located in the Liverpool Plains Approved Area and are all roads are accessible to B-heavy Vehicles up to and including 25/26m B-Doubles subject to the following conditions:

(1) It is the responsibility of the driver of the B-Double transport to satisfy themselves that the proposed route is suitable for use under the conditions existing at the time and undertake a risk assessment of the route prior to travelling the route to assess the suitability of travel along the route.

(2) Temporary route restrictions may be imposed when routes become impassable for heavy vehicles.

(3) Following rainfall the driver of a B-Double transport must check with the Liverpool Plains Shire Council, or the RTA Area Office, regarding possible road closures.

(4) Extreme care must be taken on the route especially during wet weather or during school bus hours.

Merriwa Road and the New England Highway are fully approved under the Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) Maps for GML, CML, and Higher Mass Limit (HML) B-Doubles up to 26 metres.

6.7.2 Proposed Development Traffic Generation

Traffic generated by the development during construction and operation has been obtained from the Applicant and is presented in **Table 13** and **Table 14** respectively.

Table 13: Construction Traffic Generation

Construction Development Traffic			
Activity	**Vehicle Type**	**Total Movements**	**Avg. Daily Movements**
Builders	*Cars/Utes/vans*	15	1
Trades	*Cars/Utes/vans*	1,092	7
Concreters	*Cars/Utes/vans*	100	1
Total Light Vehicle Movements		1,207	**9**
Concrete supply	*Concrete trucks*	504	4
Rubbish collection	*Rubbish truck*	26	1
Fuel delivery	*Semi-truck*	26	1
Earthworks mobilisation/demobilisation	*Semi-trucks*	24	1
Roading gravel	*Semi-trucks*	60	1
Construction materials	*Semi-trucks*	55	1
Houses (transportable)	*Semi-trucks*	2	1
Total Heavy Vehicle Movements		697	**10**

Table 14: Operation Traffic Generation

Operational Traffic – Vehicle Movements			
Activity	**Vehicle Type**	**Movements per Batch**	**Movements per Day**
Feed delivery	*Truck and trailer*	59	1
Chick delivery	*Twin-axle rigid truck*	4	1
Rubbish collection	*Rubbish truck*	2	1
Fuel delivery	*Semi-truck*	2	1
Live bird transport	*Semi-truck*	95	2
Catching equipment transport	*Semi-truck*	45	1
Manure removal	*Semi-truck*	55	1
Fresh litter delivery	*Semi-truck*	15	1
Dead bird collection	*Twin-axle rigid truck*	7	1
Heavy Vehicle Average Daily Movements (64 days per batch)			**10**
Off-site staff	*Cars/Utes/vans*	60	1
On-site staff	*Cars/Utes/vans*	80	2
Light Vehicle Average Daily Movements (64 days per batch)			**3**

As shown, it is anticipated that the proposed broiler farm will generate approximately 284 heavy vehicle movements per batch (284 incoming trips / 284 outgoing trips). In determining the expected daily operational traffic, it is noted that most activities generate fewer than one vehicle trip per day. For the purposes of assessment, these values have been conservatively rounded up to the nearest whole number. While this approach ensures a conservative estimate, it likely overstates actual traffic volumes. In practice, total operational traffic is expected to be closer to 8 vehicle movements per day (comprising around 5 heavy vehicle movements and 3 light vehicle movements), rather than the 13 movements per day (10 heavy and 3 light) adopted in this assessment. While a majority of the heavy vehicles will occur during the day, broiler collection and feed deliveries can occur at night. It is noted that the surrounding traffic on New England Highway would be significantly reduced during this nighttime period.

6.7.3 Trip Distribution

The distributions of all vehicles will maintain the same route for both construction and operation. All vehicles will leave the site turning right heading south along Warrah Ridge road, turning left to Merriwa Road continuing to the New England Highway. Given the site's location, and the fact that primary deliveries and arrivals will be serviced from Tamworth.

The total peak hour traffic volumes and movements are summarised in **Table 15**.

Table 15: Development Traffic Distribution (Source: Agright, PSA)

Trip Distribution Volumes					
Phase	**Direction**	**AM Peak (In)**	**AM Peak (Out)**	**PM Peak (In)**	**PM Peak (Out)**
Construction	*Light Vehicles*	9	0	0	9
	Heavy Vehicles	10	0	0	10
Operational	*Light Vehicles*	3	0	0	3
	Heavy Vehicles	1	1	1	1

The development is expected to generate approximately 13 vehicle movements per day during operations, equating to an average of one vehicle every 15 minutes in the peak hour (around four trips per hour). Due to these low volumes, no detailed intersection capacity analysis was considered necessary, as the existing road network is expected to continue operating efficiently with the additional traffic associated with the proposed development.

6.7.4 Road Safety

TfNSW's LGA View Crashes Map identified that 1 serious crash has occurred along Warrah Ridge Road in the last 5 year period. It also notes several non-casualty, moderate and serous crashes along the New England Highway.

On further assessment of road safety, a desktop assessment of the intersections of Merriwa Road/Warrah Ridge Road and Merriwa Road/New England Highway were undertaken. Using the TfNSW's safety risk matrix, the assessment indicates that the proposed development will have "no" to "minimal" increase in the likelihood of a collision occurring. All risk items are deemed to score "Medium" for both without and with development and as such further upgrades are not warranted.

6.7.5 Site Access and Intersection Upgrades

All access to the proposed farm will be facilitated via the existing driveway connecting Warrah Ridge Road, which in turn connects to Merriwa Road. The Liverpool Plains DCP 2021 states that "*The site access must be designed to accommodate the largest vehicle expected to use the facility. Where larger vehicles are anticipated, the development application must include access and manoeuvring designs demonstrating compliance*."

To accommodate the necessary B-Double vehicles, the existing driveway is to be upgraded in accordance with the following documents:

- Liverpool Plains Shire Council's Engineering Guidelines for Development and Subdivision Works.
- AS2890.2 – Parking Facilities: Off-street commercial vehicle facilities.
- Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) Standard Drawing SD265 – Typical Semi or B-Double Vehicle Crossing (Rural Entrance).

The capability of the Merriwa Road / Warrah Ridge Road intersection was assessed which determined that a Basic Turn Right (BAR) will be required at this intersection. As there is no existing treatment on Merriwa Road leading into Warrah Ride Road, this intersection warrants a BAR upgrade.

6.7.6 Car Parking and On-Site Manoeuvring

The Liverpool Plains Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP) establishes guidelines for on-site parking in connection with various development projects. Specifically minimum on-site parking rates which outline the car parking

requirements based on the land use. The proposed development is not defined under Council's 3.4 Parking & Access and as such the minimum parking rate is subject to Council's discretion. Based on the proposed 6 full time equivalent (FTE) positions which include 2 on-site staff and 4 off-site staff, 12 parking spaces are proposed, which is consider sufficient to meet the requirements.

It is also noted that the design of the parking spaces has been reviewed against the requirements of AS2890.1 (2004), based on a User Class 1 profile which reflects the typical use and operational characteristics of the site

A comprehensive swept path assessment has been undertaken to assess the developments design for access to the largest anticipated design vehicle accessing the development site. Swept path modelling undertaken in AutoCAD and AutoTURN confirms that a 26-metre B-Double, as the largest design vehicle, can safely manoeuvre within the site and enter and exit without conflict. Although the internal road design is not yet finalised, preliminary modelling indicates that two-way B-Double movements are achievable. It is not expected that two B-Doubles will be on site at the same time, as deliveries are staggered, and most heavy vehicles will be smaller semi-trailers, reducing potential conflicts. The assessment focuses on critical turning movements, as vehicles remain within the carriageway when travelling in a forward direction.

6.8 VISUAL IMPACTS

6.8.1 Existing Landscape Character

The local topography is characterised by moderately undulating hills with open agricultural land. The terrain of the site and the immediate surrounding area is generally characterised as flat, with a gently sloping residual terrain.

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 Liverpool Plains 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 7km North West of Warrah and 13km west of the Willow Tree. 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 770m to Warrah Ridge Road to the northwest. The nearest residential dwellings to the site are located approximately:

- 800m to the north west.
- 1.15 km to the south.
- 1.3 km to the south 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 and grazing 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 770m to Warrah Ridge Road to the northwest. As a result of these setbacks, the existing roadside vegetation 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 800m to the north of proposed farm and as such the potential visually impact is expected to significant reduced due to the distance and intervening remnant vegetation buffers.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Air Quality Report, Vegetated Environmental Barriers consisting of 3 rows of planting will be installed at the fan ends of the sheds which will assist in further minimising the risk of odour emissions and providing additional visual screening.

6.8.3 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 silver colourbond roofs and pale eucalypt colour walls.

It is considered the location of the farm, the separation distances to neighbouring residential dwellings, and the existing vegetation, will minimise the risk of glare or reflectivity impacts.

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. No adverse effects from glare are expected.

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 Willow Tree farm will be:

- LPG used for heating of sheds.
- 4,000L of Diesel Fuel used to run the back-up generators in the event of power supply failure.
- Water treatment chemicals including:
  - Sodium hypochlorite (10-30%).
  - Citric Acid.
- Sanitation products for cleaning of the broiler sheds at the end of production cycle (e.g. Microgard 755N) and biosecurity wheel spray facilities.
- Sanitation products for staff entering and existing the broiler sheds (handwashing and footbaths (e.g. Micro-4).
- Other commercially available products may also be used on the broiler 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 Cleans).

A Screening Assessment of the storage of dangerous goods on the site has been undertaken by Lote Consulting and is included in **Appendix 10**. As shown in **Table 16**, only the quantity of LPG exceeds the specified threshold, and as such a Preliminary Hazard Assessment for LPG is required.

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 broiler 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.

All other chemicals used on the site are typical for agricultural operations and will be stored in appropriately secured, sealed and bunded facilities in accordance with the relevant Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

Table 16: Dangerous Goods Storage Quantities

STORAGE AREA	DG CLASS	PACKING GROUP	MAX QTY	SEPP 33 GUIDELINE SCREENING THRESHOLD
LPG Tank	2.1	N/A	24 T	10 tonne

6.9.2 Preliminary Hazard Assessment

The proposed broiler farm requires Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in order to provide heating for the broilers during the cooler months. LPG gas is stored within 8 x 3T, above ground tanks. 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.

The PHA has been prepared based on the proposed storage of LPG on the broiler farm in accordance with the Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory paper (HIPAP) No. 4(2) and No. 6(3) and is included as **Appendix 11**. 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 Bushfire Threat Assessment Report to address the requirements that are applicable to the proposed development. A Copy of this report in included as **Appendix 7**.

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. 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 poultry sheds and residences comply with the PBP with the BAL rating of BAL-Low identified for the manager residences.

6.10.2 Emergency Access

Access to the site is proposed via an entrance road from Warrah Ridge Road to the north east. This entrance road extends at a distance of approx. 1.3km to the location of the poultry sheds. 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 810,600 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 broilers. 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 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 recycles where practical or otherwise managed and disposed on 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 wase that cannot be recycles or beneficially re-used. Potential waste streams are identified below.

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 shaving/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 provided to a commercial composter 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.

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 cold storage. Once a week a rigid truck will collect the birds from the farm and transport them for processing at the Oakburn Rendering Plant.

Dead birds will not be allowed to be stockpiles 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

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, broiler carcasses would be collected in sealed trucks and taken to the 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 broilers from the broiler farm to be rendered in approximately 3 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 septic system. 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 systems 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 their construction.

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 needed 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 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In 2020, AgriFutures Australia published information concerning the Australian chicken meat industry's carbon footprint. The research indicated that the Greenhouse Gas (CHG) Emissions associated with chicken meat was 3.8 kg CO2-e/kg for conventional production system and 4.0 kg CO2-e/kg for free range production. It should be noted

that the Co2 emissions per kg of bird weight is substantially lower than all other forms of commercially grown animal protein.

Of these emissions:

- Hatchery operations contributed 4%.
- Feed production contributed 77 – 79%.
- Farming contributed 9 – 12% with the majority attributable to fossil energy consumption and a smaller portion from manure.
- Meat processing contributed 7 – 8%.

In 2022 / 2023 the average meat per bird grown in NSW was 2.2kg.

As the farm has a maximum capacity of 810,600 birds and there are 6 cycles per year the farm can produce up to 4,863,600 birds per year (assuming no mortalities). This equates to 10,699,920 kg of meat produced by the Willow Tree Farm per year.

Assuming 4.0 kg CO2-e/kg for free range production, the number of birds produced at the farm per year would generate 42,799,680kg (~42,800T) of CO2-e. As noted above, the farming activity itself is responsible for up to 12% of total emissions and accordingly, the farm will generate 5,135,962kg (5135T) of CO2-e per annum. As noted above, the majority of farming emissions is attributable to fossil energy consumption and a smaller portion come from manure. As such, the above figure is considered conservative as the Willow Tree Farm will utilise a behind the meter, ~1800kW solar farm and associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to provide a renewable energy source for operations as opposed to a reliance on fossil fuels.

With consideration of the above, the project will note result in greater than 25,000 Tonnes of Scope 1 or 2 Emissions and further assessment under the EPA's *Greenhouse Gas Assessment Guide for Large Emitters, 2025* is not required.

6.13 ANIMAL WELFARE

The proposed broiler farm will operate as a grower of poultry on behalf of Baiada Poultry. As such, the broiler farm will be contractually required to adopt the Company's rigorous standards for animal welfare. Baiada and Agright are committed to achieving high standards of broiler welfare and understand that broiler welfare and economic performance go hand-in-hand. As well as being in the broiler'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 broiler farm will employ the latest technology for the collection of live broilers, 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 Animal Welfare Codes of Practice and Standards (included as **Appendix 14**) which are applicable to the operation of the proposed 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.*
- *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).*

With respect to the free range operations, the Willow Tree farm will be operated in accordance with the relevant standards required by the processor. In this regard, the farm has been designed and can be operated in accordance with the following standards (included as **Appendix 15**):

- *RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme Standard - Meat Chickens* - AUGUST 2020 v1.1.

- *Chicken Meat Standards of Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia (FREPA) Limited 2023.*

6.14 BIOSECURITY

There is a major economic incentive for Agright 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 across Australia and will implement a range of proven biosecurity measures at the Willow Tree Farm. 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.

Agright endorses high standards for biosecurity which follow the procedures and requirements set out in the following documents (included as **Appendix 16**):

- *National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Chicken Growers* produced by the Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc (dated May 2020).
- *Approved Farming Scheme Standard – Meat Chickens* produced by the RSPCA (dated August 2020).
- *National Standards for Chicken Facility Standard Barn Sheds New Building Projects 2020* by Baiada (dated November 2020).

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.

Standard operating procedures will also be in place to ensure cleaning of sheds (between batches) 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 event of a mass mortality event, the proponents will contact the supplier and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and follow all directions made.

6.15 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

As a supplier to Baiada Poultry, the Willow Tree Farm will be designed and operated in strict accordance with the following Baiada documents (included as **Appendix 17**) :

- *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 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 17: Management and Mitigation Measures

IDENTIFIED IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES
BIODIVERSITY	• The clearance boundary is to be clearly marked with flagging tape; • All material stockpiles, vehicle parking and machinery storage will be located within cleared areas, and not in areas of native vegetation. • 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. • It is recommended that all Priority Weeds within the impact area be controlled as part of routine property maintenance. Particular attention should be given to the weeds listed in Table 6.1 of this report. • All machinery and equipment are to be inspected for weeds and weed propagules prior to going on site to prevent the introduction of new weed species to the area. • Each outdoor light fixture will be designed to be aimed downwards to reduce light spill into areas of native vegetation. Lights will only be used when necessary, during times of low light and/or heavy fog. • Exposed surfaces and stockpiles are suppressed by regular watering or equivalent; • All trucks entering and exiting the site with loads have their loads covered; • Trucks associated with the development do not track dirt onto the public road network; • Public roads used by these trucks are kept clean; and • Any land stabilisation works are carried out progressively on site to minimise exposed surfaces.
ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE	• 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 Project 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 should be followed. • Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the NPW Act 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	• Design and construct the stormwater management systems as documented in the Civil Design Memo prepared by Agright and included as **Appendix 9**. • Vegetation coverage within the range areas is to be managed and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the FREEPA Chicken Meat Standards 2023.

ODOUR AND DUST	**Construction:**
	• Minimising disturbed areas;
	• Treating any long-term stockpiles to minimise dust emissions;
	• Road management:
	  ○ treatment of the external road surface used by heavy vehicles to stabilise the roads; and/or
	  ○ watering of the roads and/or open areas to reduce dust emissions as required;
	• Limiting vehicle speeds during conditions where dust emissions have the potential to be higher than normal due to dry or windy conditions;
	• Revegetating disturbed areas around the site which are not required for vehicle traffic or operations.
	Operational Phase:
	• 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 prevent rainwater entry, as wet feed can be a potential odour source.
	• The maximum stocking density will be adhered to.
	• Regular monitoring and maintenance of the tunnel ventilation systems and bird drinkers will be performed 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 litter will occur to identify, remove and replace any caked material beneath drinking lines and/or areas with excessive moisture content.
	• Spent 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. Handling of the material will be avoided during adverse climatic conditions, such as cold air drainage in the early morning or at night and during strong winds, wherever possible.
	• 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 the enclosed on-site dead bird facility 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.

HAZARDS	• 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).
BUSHFIRE	• 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 • Ensure that utility services are adequate to meet the needs of firefighters. • 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.
WASTE	• Operations are to be undertaken in accordance with all statutory and regulatory requirements.
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT	• Operations are to be undertaken in accordance with all statutory and regulatory requirements.
ANIMAL WELFARE, BIOSECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	• Operation to be in accordance with all industry practice / processer requirements.

8. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

8.1 PROJECT DESIGN

The proposed development will deliver a new, state of the art, free range poultry broiler farm with the capacity to accommodate up to 810,600 birds. This will add to the supply, helping to meet the growing demand for free range poultry meat 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, geology and soils, contamination, bushfire and stormwater to avoid direct impacts on the environment.

In addition, the location maximises setbacks to the nearest rural dwellings (sensitive receptors) in proximity to the site and retains the substantial remnant vegetation which provides screening and buffer of the operations. The combination of setbacks to sensitive receptors, the use of best practice methods and additional mitigation and management measures will ensure that the farm does not result in any unacceptable amenity impacts in terms of noise, air emissions, traffic, biosecurity and hazard risk.

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 Agright's contribution to capacity which will be generated by this development, it is highly likely that there will be significant shortfall in supply of poultry products in the Australian market in the coming years.

The New England Region is 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. This combination of factors is only present in a handful of areas across Australia which results in the long-term protection of the poultry industry in the New England Region.

In this regard, the processer, Baiada Poultry is completing works on their State Significant Development Approval (SSD9394) for a new Integrated Poultry Processing Facility (Oakburn) in Tamworth which with the capacity process up to 3 million birds a week. To support the increase in processing of poultry within the region, significant increases in the supply of birds (approximately 350 additional sheds) will be required. This growth is expected to occur via an expansion of existing farms, as well as new farms located on suitable sites, located within a 2–hour drive of the processing facility to comply with animal welfare considerations.

In addition, the Willow Tree Farm is specifically aimed at increasing the supply of Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia (FREPA) accredited free range birds, which current represents about 18 – 20 % of the meat produced. As such, a commensurate increase in free range poultry farms is also required as part of the expansion of broiler production in Australia and the New England Region.

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, 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 Guyre, 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"*.

The processed development closely aligns with the vision for the region as it will support significant growth in agriculture, agribusiness and livestock meat production. The poultry farm will support the supply to meet the forecast growth in demand for poultry within the entire cluster supporting significant expansion of poultry farming and supporting industries, facilitating employment and an increase local spending associated with poultry production.

8.3 STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

In relevant State and Local environmental planning instruments are listed and addressed in Section 4.1. 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 Environmental Operations Act 1997*
- *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 *Liverpool Plains Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 2010*.

8.4 COMMUNITY VIEWS

The community engagement process undertaken was aimed at providing the surrounding community to provide feedback to be addressed within the proposed EIS and engage on relevant perceived issues. It is acknowledged that in response to the consultation in the immediate local area, a group of surrounding landholders and residents sent a combined letter citing concerns regarding the potential negative impacts to their properties, amenity and the environment. In particular the submission cited the following factors:

- Odour.
- Dust/air pollution.
- Adverse effects on water drainage and ground water.
- Noise.
- Traffic.
- Biosecurity.

Agright provided a written response to the objection letter in which these concerns were acknowledged. It was made clear that the issues raised in the correspondence were all matters were required be assessed as part of the EIS, which was being prepared in support of the project and would be addressed by a range of suitably qualified specialists. The response letter also welcomed the opportunity for objectors to meet with the project team at a mutually convenient time to discuss the proposal in more detail and address any specific questions or concerns. Contact details were provided to enable such a meeting to be arranged; however, no requests were received. These technical assessments have all subsequently demonstrated that no adverse effects on any neighbouring or surrounding properties are expected, and that all impacts are within relevant acceptable guidelines and/or criteria.

8.5 LIKELY IMPACTS

8.5.1 Natural Environment

Biodiversity – The proposed Willow Tree Farm has been intentionally located within a cleared cultivated paddock and no clearing of native vegetation is required to facilitate the development. Wildthing Environment Consultants have been prepared an Ecological Assessment for the project which concludes that the impact of the project is limited to a small, incremental modification of habitat for a number of threatened species which may utilise cropping areas. However, given the relatively small size of the impact, current level of disturbance and mitigation measures,

Wildthing Environmental concludes that the proposal is unlikely to significantly impact on any items of ecological significance.

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 1964 and has 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 of contamination and is suitable for construction of the proposed poultry farm.

8.5.2 Built Environment

Stormwater - Stormwater flows around the proposed poultry farm will be directed via stormwater drainage channels to the proposed stormwater retention dam to the north of the facility. The sizing of the stormwater retention dam will ensure no worsening of flood conditions on up or downstream properties.

All sheds are constructed on an elevated pad and concrete slab and insulated panel wall. As such internal shed areas are separated from interaction with stormwater or roof water. Rainfall runoff from the shed roofs and free range areas will be directed into the grassed swales running between the broiler sheds and discharged into the external proposed retention basin. The grassed swales provide opportunities for infiltration and stormwater treatment for run-off water entering the swale. With respect to the nutrient deposits within the range areas, research undertaken the Australian Government - Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation in 2015 indicates that the runoff from free range areas would generate less load on the environment than, for example, a commercial golf course; and that the nutrients that accumulated in the soil of the range areas were at concentrations comparable to areas where the birds do not access.

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 broiler farm will pose a minimal risk with respect to both stormwater quantity and quality.

Air Emissions - The modelling presented in the Air Quality Assessment Report considers the proposed operation and has been performed in accordance with the Approved Methods and indicates that the proposed development would not lead to any exceedances of the odour criterion (5 ou) at the nearest sensitive locations under any of the tested placement schedules. The maximum concentration of the odour emissions at the nearest sensitive receptors 4.4 ou which is 12% less than the 5 ou criteria.

With respect to dust impacts, the modelling dust showed the maximum predicted 24-hour concentration in isolation for all sensitive receptors was 6.0 µg/m^3. The cumulative 24-hour PM10 assessment which includes the particulate emissions from the sheds and background levels showed additional days above the 50 µg /m^3 criterion, however this was largely due to the high (49.4 µg/m^3) background, rather than the proposed operations. For the annual average, no receptors are above the criterion. Due to the high background, Astute contemporaneously assessed the hourly PM10 concentrations in line with the Approved Methods. When assessed contemporaneously there are no exceedances of the 24 hour PM10 criterion due to operations of the farm.

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 – It is anticipated that the proposed broiler farm will generate approximately 284 heavy vehicle movements per batch (284 incoming trips / 284 outgoing trips), averaging approximately 5 heavy vehicle trips and 3 light vehicle trips per day. The site and surrounding road network are located in the Liverpool Plains Approved Area and are all roads are accessible to Heavy Vehicles up to and including 25/26m B-Doubles subject to the stipulated conditions. While the use of B-Doubles is allowed, the Applicant will upgrade the site access with Warrah Ridge Road in accordance with Council's standards as well as implement a BAR at the intersection of Warrah Ridge Road and Merriwa Road. Internally, 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 770m to Warrah Ridge Road to the north east. As a result of these setbacks, the existing remnant vegetation 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 800m to the north of proposed farm and as such the potential visually impact is expected to significant reduced due to the distance, and intervening remnant vegetation. With consideration of these factors the proposed poultry farm is not expected to significantly change the existing landscape character or create any unacceptable visual impacts.

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 broiler farm requires Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in order to provide heating for the broilers during the cooler months. 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. The PHA has been prepared based on the proposed storage of LPG on the broiler farm in accordance with the Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory paper (HIPAP) No. 4(2) and No. 6(3). 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.

8.5.3 Social

It is acknowledged that in response to the consultation in the immediate local area, a group of surrounding landholders and residents sent a combined letter citing concerns regarding the potential negative impacts to their properties, amenity and the environment. In particular the submission cited the following factors:

- Odour.
- Dust/air pollution.
- Adverse effects on water drainage and ground water.
- Noise.
- Traffic.
- Biosecurity.

The EIS and associated technical reports have considered these potential impacts on the nearby sensitive receptors and has found that the potential amenity impacts are compliant with the relevant accepted standards, including for odour, noise and traffic and will not result in any unacceptable impacts.

The proposed Willow Tree Farm is a rural use, located in a rural area, and is in keeping with the rural character in terms of building height, setbacks and visual amenity. The use is permitted with consent within the RU1 Zone of the Liverpool Plains LEP 2012 and aligns strongly with the objectives for the zone.

While the operation of the proposed farm will be a new agricultural activity operating in the locality, the farm will not operate in a manner which introduces any unacceptable amenity impacts and is compatible with the surrounding rural land uses.

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) was engaged to undertake an Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment for the Willow Tree 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 NSW.

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; no Aboriginal objects or intact archaeological deposits are likely to be harmed.

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 $28.234 million, a majority of which is associated with construction of the proposed farm. In this regard, it is estimated that the project will create 50 construction jobs over a 9 month period to deliver the project as well as indirect opportunities for local tradespersons to assist with the build (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 substantial positive economic and employment impact for the region. More broadly, the proposed development will contribute to the expansion of the New England poultry cluster to and assist Baiada in increasing production capacity to meet the growth in demand for poultry meat products in Australia.

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 18.**

Table 18 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 expand agricultural diversity on the site and support the broader growth

PRINCIPLE	APPLICANTS RESPONSE
	and economic development associated with poultry production in the New England Region.
(c) conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity, namely, that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration,	**Complies.** The proposed Willow Tree Farm has been intentionally located within a cleared cultivated paddock and no clearing of native vegetation is required to facilitate the development. Wildthing Environment Consultants concludes that the impact of the project is limited to a small, incremental modification of habitat for a number of threatened species which may utilise cropping areas. However, given the relatively small size of the impact, current level of disturbance and mitigation measures, Wildthing Environmental concludes that the proposal is unlikely to significantly impact on any items of ecological significance.
(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. As noted in the CHG emissions assessment, the majority of farming emissions from poultry production is attributable to fossil energy consumption. In this regard, the Willow Tree Farm will utilise a behind the meter, ~1800kW solar farm and associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to provide a renewable energy source for operations as opposed to a reliance on fossil fuels.

8.6 SITE SUITABILITY

The Environmental Impact Assessment has reviewed the site's suitability for a new poultry farm and considered all matters relevant to the economic, social and environmental impacts of the development. As required by the SEARs, an overall summary of the site suitability is presented below.

Due to the growth in the demand for poultry products in Australia, there is a need to increase broiler capacity in the Tamworth Region wherever possible. However, a broiler farm requires a number of physical and location characteristics to ensure its suitability for the operation. In this regard, a broiler farm in this area requires:

- A location within 2 hours of the Oakburn Processing Plant in accordance with Animal Welfare requirements (Willow Tree is ~1 hour 15mins 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.
- Suitable geology to enable construction of the farm.
- Access to all necessary infrastructure networks including power, telecommunications, gas providers and heavy vehicle haulage 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.

The proposed Willow Tree site has the required combination of factors which enable a new free range broiler farm to be delivered in an efficient manner with minimal negative environmental, social or economic impacts. As such, it is considered that this specific site is very suitable to accommodate a new free range farm.

9. CONCLUSION

The project involves the construction of a new free range poultry broiler farm on land at 755 Warrah Ridge Road, Warrah Ridge, NSW 234. The Willow Tree Farm will be comprised of fourteen (14) poultry sheds with a maximum capacity of 810,600 free range meat chicken (broilers) that will be grown for human consumption.

The findings of the detailed technical assessments undertaken in relation to the proposed Willow Tree 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 new farming operation on the site, and will contribute to the forecast growth of poultry production in the New England Region. This growth is required to support the approved increase in poultry processing which will be undertaken at Baiada's Oakburn Processing Plant.

This EIS recommends that the Development Application be approved, subject to relevant and reasonable conditions.

APPENDIX 1	DEVELOPMENT PLANS	AP01
APPENDIX 2	SEARS RESPONSE	AP02
APPENDIX 3	CERTIFICATES OF TITLE	AP03
APPENDIX 4	GEOTECHNICAL REPORT	AP04
APPENDIX 5	ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT	AP05
APPENDIX 6	CULTURAL HERITAGE DUE DILIGENCE ASSESSMENT	AP06
APPENDIX 7	BUSHFIRE THREAT ASSESSMENT	AP07
APPENDIX 8	CIVIL DESIGN STATEMENT	AP08
APPENDIX 9	TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT	AP09

APPENDIX 10	DANGEROUS GOODS SCREENING ASSESSMENT	AP10
APPENDIX 11	PRELIMINARY HAZARDS ASSESSMENT	AP11
APPENDIX 12	AIR QUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	AP12
APPENDIX 13	NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	AP13
APPENDIX 14	GUIDELINES – ANIMAL WELFARE	AP14
APPENDIX 15	GUIDELINES – FREE RANGE	AP15
APPENDIX 16	GUIDELINES – BIOSECURITY	AP16
APPENDIX 17	GUIDELINES – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	AP17

PSA CONSULTING

psaconsult.com.au

PSA Consulting Pty Ltd
ABN 83 109 836 197
T + 61 7 3220 0288
Brisbane (Head Office) L20 / 127 Creek Street, Brisbane / Meeanjin Qld 4000
PO Box 10824 Adelaide Street Brisbane Qld 4000