

ERM

Environmental Resources Management

Bankstown Town Hall Development Application (DA)

Traffic & Access Assessment Review

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1. Introduction

In 2005 the State Government through the Department of Planning published the Metropolitan Strategy, *City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future*. Following this document, draft Subregional Strategies were prepared including the West Central Subregional Strategy covering Bankstown.

In keeping with the visions and objectives highlighted in the subregional strategy, Bankstown City Council acted in redeveloping various Council owned sites within Bankstown CBD, as part of its CBD Renewal Project. The CBD Renewal Project includes the following:

- Refurbishment of the existing Town Hall building; and
- Relocation of Bankstown City Library into the Town Hall building.

The refurbished Town Hall building will remain in its present form but will be remodelled to incorporate the main Bankstown Library, as well as some ancillary meeting spaces for community use. Bankstown Library is to be moved from an adjacent site, on The Mall, to the current Town Hall building. In order to create space for the relocation of the library, council proposes to remove the existing 1,300 seat auditorium in the Town Hall building.

AECOM was engaged by Bankstown City Council to prepare a Transport Statement for the relocation of Bankstown City Library to the current Town Hall building. The impact of this relocation and the redevelopment of the Town Hall to incorporate the library facility, in terms of trip generation and access was the primary focus of AECOM's Transport Statement.

This report details a review of the traffic and access assessment for the proposed Project and has been prepared by *Samsa Consulting Pty Ltd*, Transport Planning & Traffic Engineering Consultants, for *Environmental Resources Management* (ERM) as part of the Development Application (DA) assessment process.

1.1 Objectives & Scope of Work

The objective of this assessment is to undertake a review of the Transport Statement prepared as part of the DA for the proposed re-development of Bankstown Town Hall and Library buildings. As part of the review, traffic and transport impacts would be confirmed with respect to traffic, parking and access operations and appropriate consent conditions would be drafted, as required. The transport review would provide input into an overall DA assessment report.

ERM are assessing the overall DA and require technical input with respect to the Project's traffic and access assessment. This assessment has been carried out to provide the independent technical input including:

1. Review of relevant documents and background information including DA Transport Statement prepared by AECOM
2. Site visit of the proposed development site and surrounding area to confirm traffic, access, parking and transport operations
3. Review traffic and transport related issues in submissions received during the public exhibition period

4. Identify any additional information or clarification required from Bankstown City Council (BCC) to complete an assessment of the DA
5. Provide input into an overall DA assessment report including consideration of:
 - Existing transport conditions and potential impacts of the project, eg. traffic, parking, access, public transport, loading, pedestrian and cyclist facilities, etc.;
 - Required level of upgrade works to service the redevelopment and a timeframe for completion and/or staging, if required; and
 - Proposed draft conditions of approval, as necessary.

In undertaking the review, the following documents were referenced / reviewed:

- Accessibility Solutions "*Bankstown Town Hall and Library Redevelopment: Access Report*", 18 November 2010
- AECOM Australia "*Bankstown Town Hall Redevelopment Transport Statement*", 19 November 2010
- Bankstown City Council Development Control Plan 2005 – Part D8 Parking, December 2005
- FJMT "*Architectural Drawings for Bankstown Town Hall Library Development Application*", August / September / October 2010
- FJMT "*Development Application for Adaptive Reuse of Bankstown Town Hall as a Library: Architectural Design Report and Drawings*", November 2010
- Lockery Planning and Development Solutions "*Adaptive and Mixed Re-Use of the Bankstown Town Hall: Statement of Environmental Effects*", November 2010

1.2 Report Structure

The remainder of this report is presented as follows:

Chapter 2 describes the proposed project.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the traffic and access assessment undertaken for the project.

Chapter 4 details the stakeholder and community issues raised in project submissions.

Chapter 5 provides conclusions and recommendations to the assessment review.

2. Project Description

2.1 Proposed Project

Bankstown City Council is currently involved in the redevelopment of various Council owned sites within Bankstown CBD. One key element of the wider CBD Renewal Project is the refurbishment of the existing Town Hall building, the focus of which is the replacement of the existing 1,300 seat auditorium with a library to be relocated from its existing adjacent site on The Mall.

The Town Hall building is located on the corner of Rickard Road and Chapel Street, approximately 120 m north of the existing library, and to the west of Council's Civic Tower. The Town Hall building is bounded by Rickard Road to the north, Chapel Road to the west, The Appian Way to the east and a public open area to the south.

The Town Hall is located in Bankstown's commercial and business precinct with nearby transport interchanges – approximately 200 m west of Centro Bankstown public transport interchange and approximately 300 m north of the Bankstown rail station and its public transport interchange.

The proposed development includes the refurbishment of the existing Town Hall building on its current footprint, with the existing basement car park to remain. The redevelopment and refurbishment will see a change of use in the replacement of the existing 1,300 seat auditorium with the following land uses:

- new library of approximately 3,900 m², to replace the existing 1,300 seat auditorium;
- 250 seat theatrette, to be retained; and
- ancillary community meeting spaces of approximately 385 m², replaced and refurbished through redevelopment of the site.

The library is essentially to be relocated from its current separate facility, approximately 120 m south of the existing Town Hall building, and will see a marginal increase in floor space area up from 3,300 m² to 3,900 m². The library will be the primary land use of the refurbished building.

There will be no change of use, nor a significant change of scale of these other land uses within the existing building.

2.2 Proposed Access

Vehicle access will be available to the Town Hall basement car park from a revised access driveway off Rickard Road, at the northwest corner of the Town Hall building. The basement car park will have a total of 71 parking spaces, comprising 44 existing parking spaces and 27 new spaces.

Pedestrian stair access is to be retained to the northern and southern entrances of the site. Pedestrians will be able to access these entry points on formalised footpaths provided on Rickard Road, Chapel Road and between the Town Hall building and the adjacent public park area to the south.

Cyclists will be able to access the site on-road from Rickard Road, Chapel Road and The Appian Way.

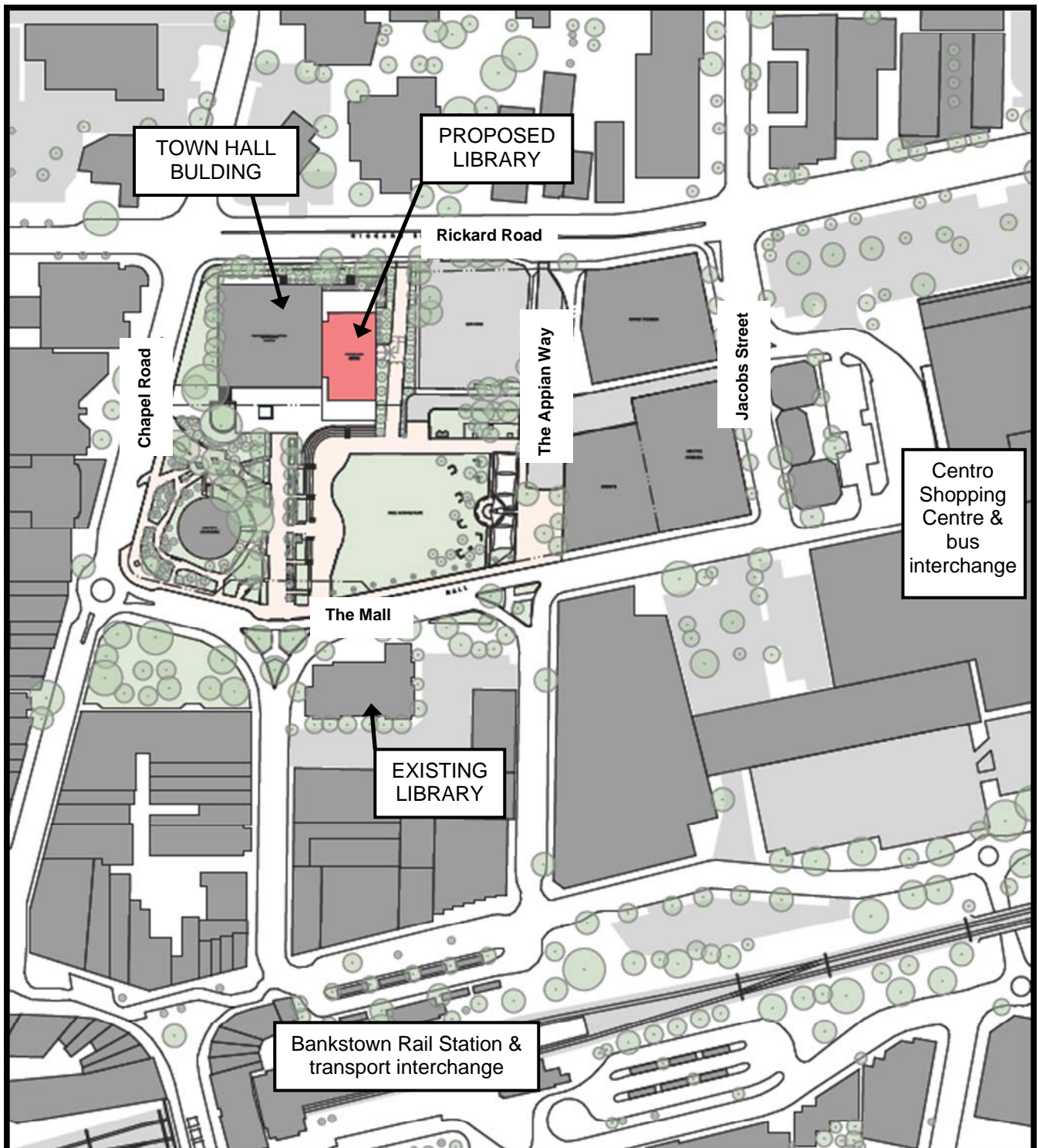


Figure 2.1: Project Location

3. Review of Transport Statement

In undertaking a review of the traffic, parking and access assessment for the proposal, AECOM Australia's "*Bankstown Town Hall Redevelopment Transport Statement*", (dated 19 November 2010) was used as the main document in addition to the other documents noted in *Section 1.1* previously.

3.1 Assessment Preliminaries

3.1.1 Policy Review

It is considered that a thorough policy review has been undertaken for the assessment. This included an examination of National, State and Local policies pertinent to the proposed development, as well as an international comparison of parking standards for similar developments.

The policy review led the study team to investigate several relevant case studies of similar development land uses. The policy objectives were to:

- ensure no net loss of parking for the city centre;
- minimise on-site parking provision in line with the promotion of alternative access modes where possible;
- minimise on-site parking provision in line with the promotion of alternative city centre parking; and
- ensure there is adequate on-site parking provision for mobility impaired patrons to access the site.

3.1.2 Case Study Review

A number of case studies were undertaken of similar development land uses to determine their traffic and parking operations and potential impacts. This evidence-based approach in undertaking the assessment is considered rational and appropriate in view of the scarcity of specific guidelines for the type of proposed development.

The evidence-based approach included library examples from Parramatta, Chatswood, Surry Hills and Blacktown, while theatre examples were included from Willoughby (Zenith Theatre), Wollongong (Illawarra Performing Arts Centre – IPAC), Parramatta (Riverside Theatre) and Sydney CBD (State Theatre).

3.1.3 Existing Library Surveys

Patronage data for the existing Bankstown Library was evaluated as part of the study assessment. Data was provided by Bankstown City Council / Bankstown Library in the form of 'gate counts' during February to May 2010.

The patronage data was complemented with additional surveys undertaken by the study team focussing on library travel patterns. These surveys were in the form of sample interview surveys, which looked at purpose of trip, mode of travel, parking location and duration of stay.

The patronage data evaluation and sample interview surveys are considered to provide comprehensive information on which to base the traffic, parking and access assessment

undertaken. Specifically, the trip generation and parking demand assessment part of the assessment was based on this information.

3.2 Parking & Site Access

3.2.1 Car Parking Provision

Bankstown city centre car parking occupancy surveys were undertaken by Bankstown City Council during November 2009, February 2010 and March / April 2010. This information was used by the study team as part of the parking assessment. The most pertinent findings of the occupancy survey indicate that even at a time when the surveyed car parks are at their highest occupancy, there is still spare capacity available. During the midday peak, there are approximately 183 short term car park spaces available and 130 long term spaces available. Significantly, this does not include the large Centro shopping centre car park (over 3,500 parking spaces), which is likely to also have some spare capacity.

Parking provision for the development is proposed to be reduced from the existing 82 parking spaces to 71 parking spaces. The provision of 71 parking spaces is considered to be adequately justified and is based on a parking demand assessment incorporating interview surveys undertaken at the existing library by AECOM during their study as well as examples from other similar developments, as mentioned previously.

The reduction of parking is considered a positive impact with respect to traffic generation in the Bankstown CBD area and is appropriate due to:

- Bankstown CBD area's well established public transport links – two public transport interchanges are located within a 5 minute walk-time (400 m distance) of the project site;
- the surveyed spare capacity of nearby off-street public parking – over 300 parking spaces, even at peak times; and
- the existing library has no dedicated on-site parking.

Complementary parking between daytime (library) and night-time (theatre) uses is considered to be an appropriate assumption and strategy. Case studies of alternative theatre sites revealed that these facilities provide no dedicated parking for theatre uses or ancillary meeting, function and rehearsal spaces for use by community or commercial groups. The peak times for access to these land uses are generally evening focused and are thus complementary with other city centre land uses. Therefore, the provision of dedicated car parking at for these land uses would be unnecessary.

3.2.2 Parking Space Dimensions

The assessment states that the parking bay dimensions are compliant with *AS 2890.1: 2004* for User Class 3 for the proposed car park. Bankstown City Council's DCP – *Part D8 Parking*, generally follows the Australian Standard, except that minimum widths are 2.5 m rather than the 2.6 m required for User Class 3 parking in *AS 2890.1: 2004*.

It is noted however, that while the proposed spaces are compliant, existing parking spaces within the car park (shown in pink with dotted outline on the 'Car Parking Vehicle Movement' plan) seem to be smaller (narrower) than the required standard. The majority would barely qualify as 'small car' spaces.

Of the proposed 27 new parking spaces, 6 spaces (approximately 22%) are marked as

'small car' spaces. This is considered a large proportion of the overall parking provision and is in excess of the 10% maximum stipulated in Council's DCP. Overall, in combination with the narrower existing spaces, which could be deemed to be 'small car' spaces also, the redevelopment provides only 21 of 71 parking spaces (approximately 30%) that are regular size parking spaces. The transport statement makes no assessment on the suitability of providing such a low proportion of regular size parking spaces.

The proposed disabled parking space is 5.4 m long and 4.8 m wide, which complies with *AS 2890.1:2004* but not with the 6.0 m length required under Council's DCP. It is considered that the disabled parking space should be redesigned or relocated so that it complies with Council's DCP length requirement.

It is considered that the parking spaces that are to be provided should be in compliance with Council's DCP dimensions and the DCP requirement of a maximum 10% of 'small car' spaces. The proposal is required to achieve at least 64 parking spaces, which represents a 10% reduction on the number of spaces currently proposed. This proportional reduction is considered to uphold the findings of the assessment with respect to car parking provision.

3.2.3 Site Access & Manoeuvring

With respect to site access and internal manoeuvring, the assessment states compliance with *AS 2890.1: 2004*. A swept path analysis was undertaken by the study team on the proposed car park layout using the Standards Australia B85 and B99 vehicles. Circulation within the proposed car park was assessed using a B85 vehicle and was found to comply.

In order to conform to minimum dimensions stipulated in *AS 2890.1*, a minimum 2.2 m height clearance is required within the car parking area, in addition to a minimum 2.3 m height clearance for travel paths to and from any accessible parking spaces. Generally, height clearances below 2.3 m require signposting at the car park entry point. It appears that the re-development complies with height clearance requirements, although only building section drawings were available, which did not show services that may decrease the height clearance, eg. fire sprinklers. The assessment is silent on height clearances and whether they conform to Australian Standards.

Servicing for the site was assessed to cater for all servicing, deliveries, loading and unloading, and refuse / garbage collections for the site. This was also found to be adequate with suitable swept path analysis.

It is noted that the 'Basement Level' plan (with 70 spaces) shows a slightly different parking layout from the 'Car Parking Vehicle Movement' plan (71 spaces). This is because the former has two spaces between the lift car and car park ramp across from Plant Room 2 rather than three spaces shown on the latter. It has been assumed that the latter is the relevant parking layout that is proposed.

3.3 Trip Generation

The trip generation assessment methodology is considered to be appropriate. It was based on a combination of the study's sample interview survey results and the library patronage data (discussed previously).

The assessment assumed a figure of 70% for trips that were solely to the library. This was reduced from the 92% revealed by the study's sample interview surveys because the assessment assumed that its survey results were influenced by some bias in the responses and possibly some misinterpretation of the survey question, which led to an exaggerated response figure. This was not elaborated on any further. Notwithstanding, the reduction to 70% is considered reasonable, particularly since the survey results revealed a high level of driver trips to the nearby Centro shopping centre.

The peak hour trip generation has been estimated at 54 vehicles per hour (vph) for the library and 74 vph in total including meeting room and theatrette land uses (refer *Section 6.5.1*). It is unclear why this is greater than the parking demand of 44 spaces for the library and 71 spaces in total, shown in the following *Section 6.5.2*. This would mean some parking occurring off-site (eg. at nearby Centro shopping centre), which is considered to be reasonable.

3.4 Proposed Mitigation Measures

In order to manage car park usage and duration of stay, the on-site car parking is proposed to operate as follows:

- Short-term parking time restriction policy for the Town Hall car park from Monday to Saturday until 6 pm – through a 3 hour maximum duration of stay time limit.

This is considered appropriate to prevent all-day parking by commuters, for example.

- Flat rate discount parking ticket for off-site parking, through box office validation will be available for evening / weekend theatre users – to cater for any significant performances at the theatrette;

This is considered appropriate for any overflow parking to nearby parking areas, which would have significant spare capacity during evening or weekend usage. It is unclear however, where any specific paid parking may be and indeed why theatre users would pay when there would significant spare capacity in nearby public car parks, eg. Centro shopping centre parking.

- Council will consider the most appropriate form of parking control in the long-term in line with opportunity for renewal of technology such as boom gates or new ticketing machines, such as pay and display or mobile phone ticketing.

This is considered a prudent approach to control parking, however, no commitment of method or timeframe has been made in the application.

The assessment identifies the Town Hall redevelopment as having excellent public transport connections, and being well served by both bus and rail services in close proximity to the site. It suggests that public transport to access the site should be promoted

in order to maximise public transport trips wherever possible. However, there is no method or timeframe detailed in the assessment.

3.5 Alternative Transport

The assessment report mentions that cyclists would be able to access the site from Rickard Road, Chapel Road and The Appin Way by cycling on-road. It is unclear how this would occur as there are no on-road cycling facilities along these roads. Notwithstanding the on-road cyclist access to the proposed development, the provision of bicycle parking is appropriate for the scale of redevelopment and land use.

A minor point to note is that it is unclear how cyclists would access the cycle parking area if and when the access roller doors were closed, ie. will roller doors be open at all times when library is open?

Pedestrian access to the redevelopment has been assessed to be adequate and this is considered satisfactory.

3.6 Construction Phase Issues

The assessment has not considered any traffic, parking and access issues during the construction phase of the project. It is anticipated that this would be covered by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to be prepared prior to construction activities being undertaken. This should be conditioned as part of the Project Consent.

4. Stakeholder & Community Submissions

One submission was received on the subject Development Application DA-1145/2010 for the proposed project. The submission came from Aldi Stores and the following traffic, parking and access issues were raised:

- There is a concern that the proposed reduction in car parking to 71 spaces is insufficient for the proposal and that this would adversely impact on the Aldi Store car park diagonally across Rickard Road / Chapel Road because it may be considered by town hall / library users to be a convenient nearby 'overflow' car park.
- The proposed car park location (existing location) should be clearly signposted and marked so that users do not pass the car park and then decide to park in the Aldi Store car park area diagonally across the road.
- Condition of consent should be imposed requiring formalisation of the proposed car parking management measures within a Car Parking and Transport Management Plan, including management measures to ensure that town hall / library users would not use the Aldi Store car park.

In response to Aldi's concerns above, the car parking provision has been shown to be appropriately derived and is considered to be adequate. Any 'overflow' parking, if it does occur, is likely to take place on-street adjacent to the re-development site or in larger parking areas nearby, eg. Centro shopping centre.

It is considered that the proposed car park is readily able to be seen by drivers and that it would be publicised to library users.

The 'Transport Statement' prepared as part of the development assessment adequately describes car parking management measures. Management measures to control car parking for the Aldi Store car park are Aldi's responsibility.

5. Conclusions & Recommendations

The assessment of traffic and transport-related issues with respect to the proposed modification has generally been undertaken with an appropriate methodology and in a thorough manner. It is considered that issues such as the provision of a low proportion of regular size parking spaces and the peak trip generation being greater than the parking demand would not significantly affect the Project's impacts and are able to be adequately managed via the proposed mitigation measures.

Outstanding issues that require clarification include the following:

- Clarification of the car park access operations and management of car parking.
 - Will roller doors on access driveway be operational and how will access be obtained if they are closed?
 - When will new technologies, such as pay and display or mobile phone ticketing, be incorporated for car park access?
- What methodology and/or timeframe are proposed for promoting the use of public transport or non private-car travel to the site?

Suggested draft Conditions of Approval are as follows:

- Drawing no's SK104 and SK112 (prepared by FJMT Architects and dated 19/11/2010) are to be amended so that all car spaces, including the disabled car parking space, comply with Australian Standard *AS 2890.1: 2004* and/or Bankstown City Council's DCP – *Part D8 Parking*. Spaces designated as 'small car' spaces are to be clearly marked and should not exceed 10% of total parking spaces. The proposal is required to achieve at least 64 parking spaces, which represents a 10% reduction on the number of spaces currently proposed and is considered to uphold the findings of the assessment with respect to car parking provision. Amended plans are to be submitted to the Principal Certifying Authority (PCA) for approval prior to the issue of a construction certificate.
- A statement is to be provided noting that height clearances within the basement car park area conform to Australian Standard *AS 2890.1: 2004*.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) is to be prepared prior to construction activities being undertaken.