

ATTACHMENT 5: UPDATED SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



THE SOCIAL ASPECT

PEOPLE AND PROJECTS. BALANCED.



Raymond Terrace Bowling Club Development Application


Social Impact Assessment Report

Social Aspect Consulting Pty Ltd ABN 57 676 178 340

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Date	17 December 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

The Social Aspect acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to land and water.

The Social Aspect is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to land and water and their rich contribution to society.

Certification page

Lead author declaration

I, Dr Jamie Seaton, certify that the social impact assessment (SIA) component of the Raymond Terrace Bowling Club Development Application contains information relevant to the SIA for the project, and that the information is not false or misleading. My qualifications and experience are listed below.

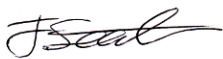
Qualifications:

1. Bachelor of Science Hons. (Human Geography)
2. Community Development Diploma
3. Doctorate of Philosophy (Human Geography).

Experience:

I am trained in social science methods and I have demonstrated social research skills in government, private and education settings.

Date: 17 December 2024



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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and project overview

Background

On behalf of the Raymond Terrace Bowling Club Cooperative Limited, Monteath & Powys Pty Ltd (Monteath & Powys) is preparing a development application (DA) to Port Stephens Council (Council). The DA is seeking development consent for alterations and additions to Raymond Terrace Bowling Club (RTBC) and the construction of a six-storey 50 rooms hotel. Following the submission of the Project's DA to Council, the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel requested a social impact assessment (SIA) to be conducted to support the DA.

Social Aspect Consulting Pty Ltd (The Social Aspect) has been commissioned to prepare this SIA to support the DA. The SIA is developed in accordance with Council's SIA guideline (Port Stephens Council, 2017). In-line with Council's guideline, the Project triggers the 'comprehensive social impact assessment' requirements because it involves hotel accommodation with the capacity for 20 persons and a dimension greater than 14 metres. To comply with Council's guideline the SIA focusses on:

- Data and research validity
- The community of interest, and the identification and consideration of relevant social impacts
- The distribution of proposed impacts
- Whether mitigation and monitoring measures proposed are appropriate and support positive social outcomes for the community.

The SIA also aligns with the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (SIA Guideline) (NSW DPHI, 2023) which outlines SIA best-practice in NSW.

Aside from this SIA, a number of other specialist studies have been commissioned for the DA. This SIA integrates the findings of those studies, as required.

Project overview

The DA seeks consent for the alterations and additions to RTBC and the construction of a six-storey 50 room hotel including 5 serviced apartments, restaurant, bar, swimming pool, gym, function space and office spaces (hereafter the 'Project').

If approved, the Project would:

- Provide car parking in excess of the Port Stephens Development Control Plan requirement
- Enable the hotel to operate 24 hours, 7 days a week
- Not alter the current trading hours of the bowling club
- Not alter the Gaming Machine Entitlements of the bowling club



- Create 6 new staff positions at the hotel and increase bowling club staff from 40 to 45 , excluding contractors.



An indicative site plan of the Project is in **Figure 1**.

1.2. Social impact assessment objectives and methodology

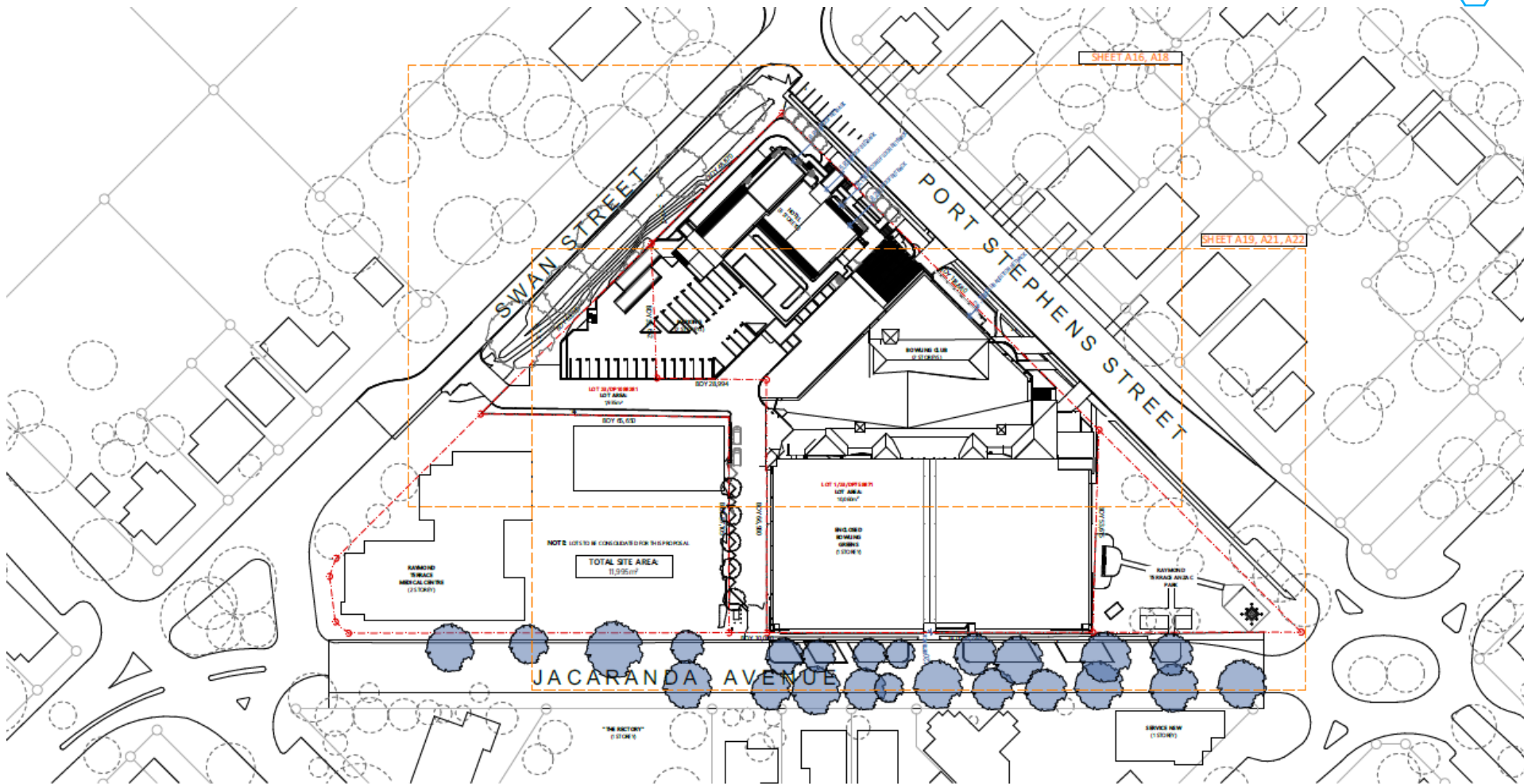
The objective of this SIA is to develop a community profile, stakeholder analysis, and social baseline to be used for:

1. Identifying and assessing potential positive and negative social impacts of the Project
2. Developing measures to enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate potential negative impacts
3. Providing recommendations to accompany the DA.

Methodology

A multi-method approach was adopted for the SIA including a combination of community and stakeholder engagement activities, and desktop and empirical research methods. **Table 1** contains the methodology details.

The assessment will address the applicable social impact categories identified by NSW DPHI (2023) (see Appendix A).



RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB : SITE PLAN

13954 - A11 - Rev E - 29 July 2024

Confidential. Copyright EJE.
Nominated Architect - Bernard Collins No. 4436 (NSW ARB)

1:1000 @ A3

EJE Integrity
Innovation
Inspiration

Figure 1: Site plan (Monteath & Powys, 2023)



Table 1: SIA methodology

Method	Details	Data produced and evaluated in the SIA
Community meeting	<p>The Project's primary engagement method was a community meeting for interested stakeholders, organised and hosted by RTBC. To attract interest, RTBC posted invitations to the event in the local paper, on notice boards in the RTBC and on its website/Facebook page. The Newcastle Herald also ran a full-page article on the Project in the lead up to the public meeting on 17 January 2024.</p> <p>The meeting attracted 21 people including RTBC management and the Project's lead architect. The meeting minutes were provided to and relied upon by The Social Aspect in the assessment of social impacts.</p>	Secondary (qualitative and quantitative)
Site visit and observational analysis	<p>To inform the assessment, The Social Aspect conducted a site visit on 4 June and undertook observational analysis of social infrastructure and human behaviour near the RTBC.</p> <p>Observations were recorded mid-morning on the week-day to maximise the variety of observations.</p>	Primary (qualitative)
Semi-structured interviews	Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with Project stakeholders as a primary data collection method. The stakeholders were selected by The Social Aspect and invited to participate in a 30-minute interview to share their opinions about the Project. The stakeholders were selected on the basis of their knowledge of Raymond Terrace, their presence in the area surrounding the RTBC, and their role in a prominent community of government organisation.	Primary (qualitative)
Review of specialist study reports	Review of and integration with the SIA report (where relevant) the noise, visual, flood, traffic and parking, and crime prevention assessment reports.	Secondary (qualitative and quantitative)
Social media analysis	A review and analysis of commentary on the RTBC Facebook page	Secondary (qualitative)



1.3. Strategic community context

Community Strategic Plan

The primary community strategy applicable to the Project is Council's Community Strategic Plan titled *Our place. Our plan. Our future* (Port Stephens Council, 2022). The purpose of the plan is to:

1. Identify the community's main priorities and aspirations over the next 10 years
2. Support community and stakeholders to play an active role in shaping their future
3. Work with other governments and agencies to achieve community priorities
4. Outline council's role in delivering these priorities and assigning resourcing to support delivery while balancing affordability
5. Maintain accountability and transparency in reporting on progress.

The plan outlines a number of goals and strategies that the Project would support, if it proceeds. Council has organised these goals and strategies under specific focus areas defined in the plan. **Table 2** describes aspects of the plan that the Project would support.

Table 2: Aspects of the plan that the Project would support

Focus Area	Key goal	Strategy	How the Project demonstrates support
Our Community	C1 Community wellbeing: improve wellbeing for our diverse community supported by services and facilities	C1.3 Provide equitable and safe access to sports, recreational, cultural and leisure activities	Enable access to an enhanced community and commercial assets (e.g. the renovated bowling club and leisure facilities)
	C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles: our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture	C2.2 Support and promote local cultural activities	Provide new dining venue (new restaurant and bar) and leisure facility for hotel guests (swimming pool)
Our Place	P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment: our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy	P1.1 Support sustainable local business development, visitation and events	A new hotel would encourage visitation and a function space would enhance corporate and community events



Focus Area	Key goal	Strategy	How the Project demonstrates support
Our Environment	E1 Ecosystem function: our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity conservation	E1.1 Protect and enhance our local natural and built environment	The new architecturally designed, modern facilities would enhance the built environment

Economic Development Strategy

The *Port Stephens Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025* (Port Stephens Council, 2021) is another strategic document relevant to development in the Local Government Area (LGA). It describes that Council is committed to driving a robust local economy, vibrant businesses, and active investment. Council's goal is to enhance life, work, and tourism in Port Stephens by fostering partnerships with the community, businesses, and government. By implementing the strategy, it seeks to create an environment conducive to business growth, town centre vitality, and economic recovery from recent challenges like natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The strategy focuses on key priorities to support business expansion across Port Stephens. These priorities include:

- Attracting investment
- Promoting sustainability
- Developing a future-ready workforce
- Backing local enterprises.

By concentrating on these areas, Council aims to create a fertile ground for businesses to flourish, adapt, and contribute to the region's economic resilience.

The strategy defines key goals and priority areas as a 'Blueprint for Growth'. **Table 3** identifies these goals and priorities and describes how the Project presents an opportunity to contribute to their realisation.



Table 3: Economic development priorities that the Project would support

Economic goal	Key priority	Opportunity presented by the Project
Investment attraction	Advocate for investment in high quality tourism products and experiences	The Project's Capital Investment Value (CIV) is \$38,554,073 and it would deliver an architecturally designed, high-quality tourist facility. It would therefore contribute to realising the key priority
	Provide end to end support for investors in Port Stephens	As the Project proponent, RTBC is an existing local investor which Council has the opportunity to support
Sustainability and resilience	Proactively support the growth of existing business and industry	The RTBC is an existing, prominent business and leisure facility. The Project would enable the growth of the business and therefore contribute to realising this key priority
Support local	Invest in place activation programs to increase vibrancy across our town centres	The Project incorporates the hotel design with an element of verticality, employing batten screening, glass accents, material transitions, and recesses. The design seeks to minimise the bulk of the building appearance and respond to human scale. The Project would positively influence vibrancy in the town centre and support the associated key priority

2. The existing social environment

This chapter provides a community profile for the population surrounding the project site. An area defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is adopted for this purpose and described in **Section 2.1**.

2.1. Community of interest

The existing RTBC and the Project is in the ABS geography known as the Raymond Terrace Urban Centre and Locality (UCL 113013). This UCL (**Figure 2**) encompasses the nominated community of interest for this study. Within the community of interest is the township of Heatherbrae and the Raymond Terrace central business district. The Pacific Motorway (A1) divides the community of interest in a north-south direction and provides an interchange to Raymond Terrace at the Richardson Road intersection. Other built and natural features of the community of interest are in **Section 2.4**.



Figure 2: The community of interest (Raymond Terrace UCL, red boundary)

2.2. Community profile and baseline

The Worimi People are the first inhabitants and of the land occupied by the RTBC. The Worimi People are prominent in the community of interest and are a well-organised and professional Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). The vision of the Worimi LALC is to improve, protect and foster the best interests of its members and all Aboriginal persons in the LALC's area (Worimi LALC, 2024). The LALC own and operate its Murrook Cultural Centre in Williamstown which provides a meeting place for Aboriginal people. The centre also aims to protect and teach Aboriginal culture to community, Government and business organisations. At the 2021 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024), 11.6% of the Raymond Terrace UCL population identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, around 8% higher than the NSW equivalent measurement.

RTBC Management contacted the Worimi LALC via email in February 2024 to notify it about the proposed development. The email invited the Worimi representative to discuss how the RTBC



could acknowledge the Worimi LALC as part of the development. No response was received from the Worimi LALC representative.

The community profile (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024) associated with the community of interest is in **Table 4**. The equivalent NSW data is provided for comparison purposes.

The most prominent characteristics in the community of interest compared to the NSW population are the following income and accommodation payments:

- Median weekly household income. The households in the community of interest have a lower weekly income of \$557 compared to NSW households.
- Median monthly mortgage repayments. The median monthly repayments committed by the population in the community interest are \$650 less compared to repayments associated with the NSW population
- Median weekly rent which is also lower in the community of interest (\$320/week) compared to broader NSW (\$420/week).

Table 4: Community profile (Raymond Terrace vs NSW, 2021)

Characteristic	Measurement	
	Raymond Terrace UCL	NSW
People	14,588	8,072,163
Male	49.6%	49.4%
Female	50.4%	50.6%
Median age	38	39
Families	3,843	2,135,964
Average children per family (families with children)	1.9	1.8
All private dwellings	6,197	3,357,785
Average people per household	2.5	2.6
Median weekly household income	\$1,272	\$1,829
Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,517	\$2,167



Characteristic	Measurement	
Median weekly rent	\$320	\$420
Average motor vehicles per dwelling	1.8	1.8

2.3. Stakeholder analysis

Project stakeholders contribute to the community of interest. For the SIA, project stakeholders have been identified via desktop research and conversations with the Project team. **Table 5** lists the stakeholders and their predicted interest in the project.



Table 5: Project stakeholders

Stakeholder	Description	Interest
Raymond Terrace Market Place (wide variety of retailers and service providers)	Business near the RTBC	Business continuity, acoustic impacts, traffic congestion and safety.
Woolworths Raymond Terrace		
Raymond Terrace Squash and Fitness		
Audika Hearing Clinic		
Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services		
The Rectory		
Ical International Customs and logistics		
Residents on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Stephens Street Swan Street Jacaranda Avenue 	Residents living adjacent to the RTBC	Traffic congestion and safety, social and economic impacts (e.g. demand for goods and services, housing supply, tourism), business and employment opportunity, environmental impacts.
Education facilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irrawang High School Hunter River High School 	Education facilities located in the community of interest	Traffic congestion and student road safety, anti-social behaviour,



Stakeholder	Description	Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Raymond Terrace Early Education CentreSt Brigids Primary SchoolRaymond Terrace Primary School		employment opportunity, environmental impacts.
Government agencies and services: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Raymond Terrace Community Health ServiceRaymond Terrace Fire StationService NSWRaymond Terrace Court House	State authority service providers in the community of interest	Continued service provision, acoustic impacts, visual impacts, traffic congestion and safety.
Port Stephens Council	Local authority	All the above



2.4. Social infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to facilities and services that enhance the social capacity of communities and may include infrastructure related to health, housing, youth, aged care, leisure, community safety facilities and road safety (Franks, 2012).

The social infrastructure in the community of interest will provide a reference point against which social impacts may be measured if the Project proceeds. Such impacts can take the form of a decrease in the quantity, diversity, or capacity of the existing social infrastructure. Conversely, an influx of people or changes to the footprint of a project may stimulate new social attributes of the communities, bolster organisational capacities and contribute to the supply of services. The following key social infrastructure was identified, which underpin the social wellbeing of the population:

- Muree Golf Course
- Boomerang Park
- Bettles Park
- Ross Walbridge Reserve
- King Park Sporting Complex
- Raymond Terrace ANZAC Park
- Raymond Terrace Community Health Facility
- Raymond Terrace War Memorial
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

3. Assessment of social impacts

Major developments can impact people in many ways, both positive and negative. The SIA process assesses a project from the perspective of people - intending for a development to be more socially sustainable when this assessment is applied. The SIA identifies, predicts, evaluates and develops responses to social impacts as part of an integrated assessment that also considers a range of environmental impacts.

This section of the report provides an assessment of the Project's predicted social impacts, including a consideration of the likely duration, extent, sensitivity and severity of those impacts. For the purpose of this assessment, the Project's predicted social impacts are evaluated against the categories outlined in the SIA Guideline (NSW DPHI, 2023). These categories are listed and defined in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Social impact categories defined by NSW DPHI (2023)

Impact category	Impact definition
Way of life	How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day



Impact category	Impact definition
Community	Community composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, and people's sense of place
Accessibility	How people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation
Culture	Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings
Health and wellbeing	Physical and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, and changes to public health overall
Surroundings	Ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity
Livelihoods	People's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits
Decision-making systems	Whether people experience procedural fairness, can make informed decisions, can meaningfully influence decisions, and can access complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

An evaluation of the Project's predicted impacts has determined the following social impact categories are relevant to the SIA:

- Surroundings (positive and negative social impacts)
- Community (positive)
- Access (negative)
- Livelihood (positive).

These are addressed individually below. Other social impact matters listed in the SIA Guideline that do not appear in the list above were deemed irrelevant to the Project and will not be assessed further in the SIA.

Note that the Project's potential influence on crime rates in the social locality was considered (along with a range of other potential Project influences) during the SIA scoping exercise. The topic was not raised as an issue by any community members who attended the initial community meeting. Furthermore, it did not emerge in any social media commentary about the Project. Given crime was not identified as a prominent topic by the community and other Project



stakeholders, it was not part of further investigations undertaken for the SIA. Instead, the crime prevention specialist study was reviewed as part of the SIA. Local police were notified and invited to comment during the exhibition of the DA by Port Stephens Council. At the time of writing this Third Revision of the SIA, no issues were raised by local Police in relation to the DA.

3.1. Predicted positive social impacts

3.1.1. Surroundings

According to the SIA guideline, social impacts associated with surroundings are defined as access to, and use of, services that the natural or built environment provides. This includes public safety and security, loss or enhancement of public spaces, aesthetic value and amenity, and impacts on the perceived quality and uses of a built area.

Although not a 'public' asset, the RTBC is a business that provides services (e.g. community grants) and facilities (e.g. conference and meeting spaces, bowling and croquet lawns) utilised by a broad range of people living in the community of interest. It therefore plays a quasi-public role in the community of interest in its current form and this role would be preserved should the Project proceed. It's support for the Raymond Terrace RSL is a case in point:

"They've [the RTBC Management] been very supportive of the RSL as a body, we are charitable organisation and in that respect they have supported us by making their facilities available to us for example, for the conduct of commemorative services and in the event of inclement weather, instead of having the service in the park, we move it holus-bolus to the covered green at the bowling club during wet weather...also for example, on ANZAC days we conduct our gunfire breakfast in the club and go back there for after-service refreshments and that sort of thing. We hold our annual ANZAC lunch at the club and usually hold our Christmas lunch at the club as well" (Interview participant #1).

At the public meeting about the Project hosted by the Project team, meeting attendees discussed the role that the Project could play in providing an emergency response centre for the community during flood events. It was acknowledged that the Project's hotel rooms are designed to be above the town flood level. This aspect of the Project is relevant to the 'surroundings' social impacts category.

If the Project proceeds and it provides capacity for continued and larger community functions, and also an emergency response facility during an emergency situation, people living in the community of interest would yield positive social impacts. These impacts would not arise if the Project does not achieve planning consent.

On this basis, the Project is predicted to create a positive social impact of **high significance** (likely to occur, moderate magnitude) for the surroundings of people in the community of interest.

3.1.2. Livelihoods

The SIA Guideline describes 'livelihoods' as a social impact category relevant to new developments. Livelihood impacts relate to people's capacity to sustain themselves, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of those impacts. The



impacts can arise from new employment and business opportunities (positive) created by a project, or from disruption it yields during construction (negative).

The two potential positive impacts the Project might create for livelihoods in the community of interest are described below.

Employment

If the Project is approved, it is likely a positive social impact on livelihoods in the community of interest would be achieved via new employment opportunities it would create. During operations, the Project is forecast to increase the number of bowling club staff employed from 40 to 45 and create an additional 6 positions to service the hotel. This number excludes contractors and also the construction workforce that would be required.

It is anticipated that the majority of employees required for the operation of the Project would be sourced from the LGA. It is likely that a portion of the construction workforce would also be comprised of local tradesmen and suppliers. It is expected that positive livelihood impacts would not only influence employees and construction staff themselves, but also the members of their households which would extend the positive influence the Project would create.

An interview participant described the likely positive impact that increased hospitality employment at the RTBC would create for people in the community of interest, especially for younger employment seekers:

"The opportunity for employing young people in hospitality would be of interest. At the moment, restaurants and cafes around here [Raymond Terrace] struggle to keep young people and get staff. But if we had a business that is committed to the long-term like the [proposed] hotel and the club that invested in training their staff, that would be of interest to young people trying to get into the hospitality trade. There are not a lot of opportunities for that at the moment so an expansion would be beneficial" (Interview participant #1).

The same participant predicted that construction of the proposed hotel could coincide with the completion of the M1 Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace, which is currently being built. This scenario could enable tradespeople and some of the motorway construction workforce to transition to the hotel construction. The opportunity would allow them to remain in the area and secure ongoing work. These opportunities for the construction workforce (and younger people in the case of hospitality opportunities) would foster positive distributive employment equity in the community of interest.

Noting the forecast operational employment and construction workforce opportunities that the Project is predicted to create, there is confidence that the Project would create a positive social impact of **very high significance** (almost certain to occur, major magnitude) on livelihoods if it proceeds.

Economic growth

In terms of wider economic growth, the CIV for the project is \$38,554,073 (Monteath & Powys, 2023). Adopting this CIV and 20 employees as a conservative quantity, modelling of the Project's potential economic impact was undertaken at the LGA scale (see Remplan, 2024). The modelling suggests that:



- From a direct increase in output of \$32.692 million it is estimated that the demand for intermediate goods and services would rise by \$21.476 million in the LGA
- The Project's supply-chain effects would include multiple rounds of flow-on effects, as servicing sectors increase their own output and demand for local goods and services in response to the direct economic changes
- Corresponding to the forecast change in employment would be an increase in the total of wages and salaries paid to employees. A proportion of these wages and salaries are typically spent on consumption and a proportion of this expenditure is captured in the local economy.

Comments from an interview participant supported the economic modelling described above, particularly in relation to the proposed hotel development and the tourist accommodation it would provide. The interview participant knew of two other hotels in Raymond Terrace, stating that they:

"Frequently have 'no vacancy' signs up, so I am assuming that accommodation demand in Raymond Terrace is high and it would be more so in times that [bowling] competitions are held there [at RTBC]" (Interview participant #1).

The interview participant described the accommodation demand that the proposed hotel would help to address, both in Raymond Terrace and more broadly in the LGA:

"There are a couple of small B&Bs here in the Terrace but I don't think there is a great deal of accommodation"

"Nelson Bay and the peninsula area...is a popular tourist area. So I anticipate that a hotel here would get a lot of use by tourists who use the area but couldn't get accommodation down at the bay. Additionally, we are close to the airport here, so I anticipate it would get transit accommodation by people coming in and out of the airport" (Interview participant #1).

Acknowledging the Project's potential to influence economic growth in Raymond Terrace and the wider LGA, it is predicted to create a positive social impact of **high significance** (likely to occur, major magnitude) on livelihoods (economic growth) if it proceeds.

3.1.3. Community

Social impacts associated with 'community' are defined in the SIA Guideline as impacts affecting community composition, character, cohesion, function, and sense of place. In terms of community character, these can include impacts on a community's built features that people value. In terms of cohesion and function, these can include impacts on social connections, interrelationships, networks and social interaction, and participation in community activities and institutions.

The RTBC is a prominent feature of the community which supports the character, cohesion and function of the Raymond Terrace community of interest. It provides a valuable built area that allows social connections to be made via its food and beverage services, its recreation services (bowling and croquet), or providing community and business meeting spaces. It fosters interrelationships for its patrons and promotes social connections. The RTBC's current operations achieves these social outcomes and it is essential to recognise that should the Project not proceed, its ability to maintain these outcomes would be placed at risk.



This risk was identified and discussed at the Project's public meeting, and the following commentary made by the RTBC management was recorded in the meeting minutes:

"As a business the club has many expenses that continue to grow each year. The club must adapt and look to diversify its income otherwise rising costs and changes in legislation could see the club go broke, as has happened to many clubs. Lawn bowls take considerable expense to maintain and this must be sourced from all areas beyond just membership fees".

In recognition of the Project's potential influence on community cohesion and function, and its ability to promote ongoing social connections, it is predicted to create a positive social impact of **high significance** (almost certain to occur, moderate magnitude) for people in the community of interest.

Social media commentary

The evaluation of the potential positive impacts of the Project should also recognise commentary of the RTBC Facebook page. Although not specific to any particular social impact category, the following reactions to the RTBC posts about the Project we made:

- 9 February: 4 likes, 5 shares
- 12 February: 1 love, 1 like, 1 share. Also a comment from St Brigid's Netball Club Raymond Terrace stating "can't wait for this fantastic development to kick off".
- 20 February: 4 likes
- 23 February: 2 likes.

There were no dislikes or negative comments.

3.2. Predicted negative social impacts

3.2.1. Surroundings

Section 3.1.1 defined 'surroundings' as a social impact category and outlined the predicted positive social impact the Project could have on it. Records of community consultation undertaken for the Project suggest there is a perception in the community that the Project may also yield negative impacts to its surroundings.

Flood effects

Flood-risk, whether perceived or actual, can create anxiety for people living in the community of interest. At the Project's public meeting, a question was raised about the proposed hotel's exposure to flooding. A related consideration is the potential for the Project to impact on flooding to properties adjacent the development. The qualitative flood study commissioned for the DA (Northrop, 2024) assessed both of these scenarios.

Northrop (2024) assessed the existing flood extents across the Project site, the flood impact of the proposed development, as well as the development's compliance with respect to Council's flood related development controls. It concluded that:

- The proposed development is not expected to result in a significant adverse impact in adjacent properties



- Risks to property and life can be appropriately managed through design of the proposed development, and emergency response strategy proposed.

On the basis of the above flood assessment conclusion, it is argued that the query about flooding raised in the public meeting was driven by perceived rather than actual flood risk. Accordingly, the Project's potential impact on people and their surroundings (as a result of flooding) is considered to be of **low significance** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude).

Visual impacts during operations

Visual characteristics of the Project have potential to influence a person's surroundings and amenity. These characteristics of the Project are important for stakeholders of the ANZAC Park (see **Figure 3** and **Figure 4**) which is adjacent to the existing RTBC and Project site. ANZAC Park was recently refurbished, with significant work completed as described by an interview participant:

"A quarter of a million dollar refurbishment and redevelopment of the park [was undertaken] to prepare it for the next 50 years or so really, as a commemorative park, and we've built a new commemorative wall made of granite and sandstone...and redeveloped the park as well, so its levelled out, re-arranged, additional seating put in, re-turfed, water systems and electrical supplies added" (Interview participant #1).

The visual interface between the Project and ANZAC Park was identified as being an important social consideration for the interview participant, who stated his primary concern with the Project is:

"The visual impact of that interface between ANZAC Park and the club itself. One of the initial artist impressions that were drawn up for that interface showed a double story wall at about the same height as the current roofline as the covered roof, but it is unclear to us at the moment what the architectural design of that wall will be...So where that wall goes, what it looks like when it is erected, and when construction is done there is no damage to the wall, is the concern of the community...The aesthetic design of the structure needs to be sympathetic to the memorial" (Interview participant #1).

To evaluate the potential visual impacts of the Project, a visual impact assessment (Terras landscape architects, 2023) was commissioned for the DA. It concluded that views of the Project site are generally limited to within 250m due to surrounding development and existing vegetation with filtered distant views available from the north across the Hunter River. Although there are a small number of residences, those located immediately north of the Project site on Port Stephens Street were identified as having most visual exposure to the Project and a long duration due to their permanent residency. The specific visual influence of the Project on ANZAC Park was not detailed in the report, however the assessment concluded that the Project overall would yield a low – moderate visual impact.

When considered alongside the conclusions of Terras landscape architects (2023), the interview participant's interest in understanding the interface between ANZAC Park and the Project remains a valid concern. RTBC management indicated its ongoing intent to collaborate with and consult with senior RSL representatives about the Project's interface with ANZAC Park. Acknowledging the RSL's interest in further understanding the Project's visual characteristics, the Project's potential negative visual amenity impact is predicted to be of **medium significance** (possible, moderate magnitude).



Figure 3: ANZAC Park adjacent the RTBC



Figure 4: The ANZAC memorial

Noise and vibrations during construction

Representatives of the Raymond Terrace Community Health Service located adjacent to the RTBC were attentive to the Project's potential impacts to its surroundings. The health facility provides a wide range of services for a large cross-section of people in the community of interest and wider LGA. The prospect of noise and vibration impacts (during construction only) on these people were raised in a semi-structured interview. For example, the following comments were made:

"The facility operates 7 day a week. We have staff on site 7 days per week, there is dialysis centre there, pathology, there's a GP practice that runs out of there, there is a dental unit, we have mental health, drug and alcohol, child, youth and family services, aged care services, allied health, community nursing, Aboriginal health services, all on site there" (Interview participant #2).

"There's a lot of clients that come to the centre for a huge range of services [from across the LGA, not just Raymond Terrace]" (Interview participant #2).

"The construction of the facility, when the work is being undertaken...what impacts that will have on us as far as noise, access, and convenience, in terms of people being able to access the site. Jacaranda Avenue is one of our accesses, we also have a rear entrance to the site which is directly adjacent to the bowling club. (Interview participant #3).



"The noise and so forth as far as the construction goes....no doubt they will look at what they can do to mitigate that. But making sure there is every effort to avoid that as far as an impact on our site, being exactly adjacent to it [the Project] (Interview participant #3).

Dialysis patients that frequent the facility were emphasised by one interview participant as being more vulnerable to potential construction disturbance during the patient's treatment at the facility. This is because their treatment room is located on the side of the facility closest to the RTBC. On this basis, it was predicted that patients might encounter disturbance:

"...sitting in a chair for 3 to 5 hours [receiving treatment], and you are looking out a window at a construction site....those people are there 3 times per week" (Interview participant #2).

On the assumption there would be no mitigation measures applied during construction and acknowledging the treatment of vulnerable dialysis patients in the health facility, the Project's potential negative noise/vibration impact is predicted to be of **medium significance** (possible, moderate magnitude). There will of course be mitigation measures implemented during construction which have the effect of reducing the impact significance rating (see **Section 4.2**).

3.2.2. Access

'Access' is a social impact category defined in the SIA Guideline. It considers how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities. Access to power, water, roads and other access routes is relevant, as is the restrictions of these uses.

Car parking

Access to car parking is a topic that emerged in the SIA data collection activities as a potential negative social impact that would be created by the Project. For example, a public meeting attendee queried whether or not there would be a car parking shortage as a result of the Project during its operation, and the demands the Project might place on available car parking spaces near the Project was also raised as a concern by some interview participants:

"There is adequate parking associated with the development but it is routine that the [RTBC] car park as it currently stands is often full, and car parking spreads out into the surrounding streets. So that would be an impact on neighbours if there wasn't at least an equivalent amount of parking space accounted for in the development, or even more if they anticipate more people being there" (Interview participant #1).

The potential demand on car parking spaces at the Raymond Terrace Community Health Facility was also discussed as being important:

"If we have any emergency vehicles that might need to come to the [Raymond Terrace Community Health Facility] site...that could be ambulances that from time to time are required to come....we don't have an emergency service on site, but sometimes we do have some very unwell people that need to attend (Interview participant #2).

Although being only a potential temporary impact during construction, the influence of tradespersons vehicles on available parking spaces gained attention:

"An Increase in traffic across the [Project] site, with trades on site, we really need to maintain the client parking we have [at the Raymond Terrace Community Health Facility]...but we also have the surrounding streets which are utilised by the clients as well. (Interview participant #3).



A response to the parking query raised at the public meeting was provided to all attendees at the venue. Attendees were advised by the Project team that the traffic and parking assessment conducted by Seca Solution (2023) showed that the extra spaces planned to be provided by the Project would be well above the level of demand.

A review of the Seca Solution (2023) assessment report confirms the traffic consultant's opinions that the:

- Project site provides parking in excess of Council's Development Control Plan requirement
- Notwithstanding the RTBC car park capacity, the streets along the site frontage provide popular parking alternatives for members and guests
- The Project would provide additional parking on site in addition to the existing parking supply
- The parking surveys indicate that the current on-street parking demands are acceptable with plenty of spare spaces to accommodate any additional demands in the area
- The Project would have a minimal and acceptable impact over the existing use of the site.

Although an anecdotal observation, car parks along Port Stephens Street on the day of the site visit (conducted as part of the SIA) were in excess supply (see **Figure 5**). This observation supports the commentary of the Project team and traffic consultant.

An additional query was raised in the public meeting about the Project's influence on the existing croquet lawn at RTBC. The Project team confirmed the Project would trigger a permanent relocation of the croquet lawn and that it is actively looking at two different sites that it owns as alternative venues. It is acknowledged that any impact on the croquet lawn would be several years off. Given this scenario and RTBC management's commitment to provide an alternative facility, the issue was deemed immaterial to the SIA.

Considering the available data sources, the Project's potential negative impact on access to parking is deemed to be of **low significance** (very unlikely, minimal magnitude).



Figure 5: Vacant car parks on Port Stephens Street.

Utilities

During construction of the Project, the potential interruption of power, water, and waste utilities at the Raymond Terrace Community Health Service was identified in a semi-structured interview as being a social concern. Some interview participants made the following remarks about this topic:



"If there is any disruption to power or water services...that is going to have an impact on the provision of health services at the facility. Being a dialysis unit, we have an essential site that must maintain services. So any disruption [of utilities] to our facility is quite critical. Particularly for the provision of services to those dialysing patients. They are attended on the site from very early in the morning to later in the afternoon. It's an extended period of time that they are connected" (Interview participant #3).

"It's really, really important that provision of water and power to our site, that [it is] constant provision. Dialysis operates 6 days per week, and part of dialysis is water, not just power but water, it is essential to run dialysis (Interview participant #2).

The potential for the Project to interrupt waste services at the health facility also received attention. One interview participant stated that there is a:

"Service area to manage our waste and deliveries and the like. So should there be impacts on that, there would be a particular impact on the accessibility and function of our site, to be able to maintain and deliver services (Interview participant #3).

In relation to social impacts derived from predicted utility access restrictions, an impact rating of **medium significance** (possible, moderate magnitude) is considered appropriate. This rating again ignores conventional construction impact mitigation measures that would be applied to the Project. In **Section 4.2** these mitigation measures are applied to the assessment the respective rating is improved.

4. Impact responses and conclusion

The previous chapter of this report contained the results of the SIA, including the predicted positive and negative social impacts of the Project and their impact significance ratings. The ratings were determined on the assumption that no enhancement measures would be applied to potential positive impacts and no mitigation measures would be applied to potential negative impacts. However, some measures have been identified and are recommended for implementation by the Project. If implemented, in some cases the measures would have the effect of improving the impact significance ratings nominated earlier in the report.

This chapter describes the recommended measures and then provides the SIA conclusion.

4.1. Enhancement of predicted positive impacts

The social impact significance ratings determined for the Project's potential positive impacts were either high or very-high (refer **Section 3.1**). There is an opportunity to enhance one of these impacts; the Project's impact on employment and therefore livelihoods in the community of interest.

The community profile in **Section 2.2** identified the comparatively larger proportion of Aboriginal people living in the community of interest in comparison to the wider NSW population. The predicted positive impact that the Project would create for employment of the local population could be further enhanced by fostering distributive equity of employment among the population. Noting the comparatively large proportion of Aboriginal people and



vulnerability among some Aboriginal communities, the development and implementation of an employment strategy targeting Aboriginal people is recommended for the Project.

4.2. Mitigation of predicted negative impacts

The Project's predicted negative social impacts were identified and discussed in **Section 3.2**. Mitigation measures have been identified for some of these impacts.

The first of these is the Project's predicted impact on perceptions of flood risk held by some individuals in the community. To respond to this perception, it is recommended that results of Northrop's (2024) qualitative flood study are made available to the community through the RTBC's communications channels listed in **Table 7**. These measures would assist in reducing anxiety about flood impacts and would result in an impact being unlikely and minimal in the community.

As with the flood-risk perceptions, there is an opportunity to offset the Project's predicted negative impacts on visual amenity. To respond to the Project's potential visual amenity impacts to ANZAC Park users and nearby residences, it is recommended that a meeting be organised with the relevant RSL representative to continue consultation about the Project's interface with the war memorial. This recommendation and others relating to the dissemination of the Project's architectural drawings to Project stakeholders are detailed in **Table 7**. Noting the strong, collaborative relationship that currently exists between the RSL and RTBC management, if these responses are implemented, the improved impact significance rating would be **low** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude).

The Project's construction noise and vibration impacts described by some interview participants can also be addressed by standard mitigation measures that are conventionally adopted by tradespeople. For example, site hoarding, machinery and equipment selection, shields/blankets applied to noisy machines or equipment, and attended noise monitoring can lessen construction noise and vibration impacts. If the Project is approved, a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) would be developed for the Project. The CEMP would specify the conditions under which construction could occur and it would detail the relevant construction noise and vibration mitigation measures. If the CEMP is developed and it recognises and applies measures to address the noise and vibration sensitivities in the health facility, the improved impact significance rating shown in **Table 7** would be **low** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude).

Utility interference during the Project's construction is the final predicted impact for which impact mitigation measures are available. As mentioned above, should the Project proceed to construction a CEMP would be developed and implemented prior the start of work. The CEMP would dictate the work procedures and permissions associated with any utility work associated with the Project. The CEMP would therefore reduce the risk of utility supply interruptions to the surrounding businesses and residences. In addition, it is recommended that a community and stakeholder communications plan (CSCP) be developed for the Project's construction phase. This would detail how the Project will provide advanced notice to surrounding businesses and residences of any planned power/water service interruptions that may be required, therefore



allowing the affected property owners to make alternate arrangements. Should the CEMP and CSEP be developed, a **low** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude) impact significance rating would be the outcome of the SIA for this matter (see **Table 7**).

Table 7: Responses to predicted negative social impacts

Project's predicted social impact	Description	Recommended response
Perceived flood impacts (surroundings, refer Section 233.2.1)	Proposed hotel's exposure to flooding and the potential for the Project to impact on flooding to properties adjacent the RTBC.	Make the flood study available in the RTBC in hard copy, on the RTBC website and Facebook page to balance the perception of the Project's likely flood impacts
Visual impacts (surroundings, refer Section 233.2.1)	Potential visual impacts to ANZAC Park users and nearby residences and the RSLs interest in understanding the interface between ANZAC Park and the Project.	<p>Meet with the relevant RSL representative to review the design and incorporate the RSL's design suggestions where possible</p> <p>When available, display the detailed architectural design drawings in the RTBC</p> <p>Notify stakeholders via the RTBC website, Facebook page, and communications channels at the RTBC, about the DA's public exhibition, if it is renotified.</p>
Construction noise and vibrations (surroundings, refer Section 233.2.1)	During construction, potential disturbance to the health facility patients, particularly dialysis patients in the treatment room nearest to the RTBC	Prior to the start of construction, development and implementation of a CEMP which caters to noise and vibration mitigation
Power, water, waste utility interruptions (access, refer section Section 3.2.2)	During construction, potential interruptions to utility supplies locally	Prior to the start of construction, development and implementation of a CEMP and CSCP which caters to utility supply interruptions, including notification procedures for surrounding neighbours



4.3. Conclusion

The SIA of the Project was conducted in accordance with Council's SIA guideline (Port Stephens Council, 2017) and adapted to the SIA Guideline (NSW DPHI, 2023) which outlines SIA best-practice in NSW.

The SIA objectives were to:

1. Identify and assess potential positive and negative social impacts of the Project
2. Develop measures to enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate potential negative impacts
3. Provide recommendations to accompany the DA.

A multi-method approach was applied to obtain data used in the evaluation of the Project's predicted social impacts. Those methods included semi-structured stakeholder interviews, a review of minutes of the public meeting held about the Project, a review of the specialist studies commissioned for the DA, and other methods.

In relation to some of the identified impacts, measures are recommended to enhance predicted positive impacts, and mitigation measures are recommended to mitigate negative impacts. These measures and the residue social impact significance ratings are detailed in the Project's social impact summary in **Table 8**.

Should the suggested enhancement and mitigation measures be implemented, the Project is predicted to yield the following impacts for the groups of people in **Table 8**:

- Positive social impacts of high or very high significance to its surroundings, community, and livelihoods in the community of interest.
- Negative social impacts of low significance to its surroundings and accessibility in the community of interest.

On this basis, if the Project is approved it is predicted that it would create positive social impacts overall for the people in the community of interest.



Table 8: Social impact summary

Impact to people	Social impact category	Affected parties	Impact likelihood and magnitude	Impact significance rating (non-enhanced / unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement / mitigation measures	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Residual impact significance
Predicted positive impacts								
Although not a 'public' asset, the Project could provide new community facilities (e.g. flood emergency response).	Surroundings	Community wide	Likely, moderate	High	Operation	-	-	High
Additional RTBC employees	Livelihoods	Tradespeople (construction) and hospitality employees (operation)	Almost certain, major	Very high	Construction and operation	Development and implementation of an Aboriginal employment strategy	Almost certain, major	Very high
Economic growth in Raymond Terrace / LGA	Livelihoods	Community wide	Likely, major	High	Construction and operation	-	-	High



Impact to people	Social impact category	Affected parties	Impact likelihood and magnitude	Impact significance rating (non-enhanced / unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement / mitigation measures	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Residual impact significance
Community character, cohesion and function	Community	Community wide	Almost certain, moderate	High	Operation	-	-	High
Predicted negative impacts								
Perception of increased flood risk as a result of the Project	Surroundings	Residents on Swan Street and Port Stephens Street Proposed hotel patrons	Unlikely, minor	Low	Operation	Make the flood study available in the RTBC in hard copy, on the RTBC website and Facebook page	Unlikely, minimal	Low
Visual impacts (amenity)	Surroundings	ANZAC Park patrons and residences near the RTBC	Possible, moderate	Medium	Operation	Meet with the relevant RSL representative to review the design and incorporate the RSL's design suggestions where possible When available, display the detailed	Unlikely, minor	Low



Impact to people	Social impact category	Affected parties	Impact likelihood and magnitude	Impact significance rating (non-enhanced / unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement / mitigation measures	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Residual impact significance
						<p>architectural design drawings in the RTBC</p> <p>Notify stakeholders via the RTBC website, Facebook page, and communications channels at the RTBC, about the DA's public exhibition if renotified</p>		
Noise and vibration impacts	Surroundings	<p>Surrounding businesses and residents</p> <p>Health facility patients</p>	Possible, moderate	Medium	Construction	CEMP designed to address noise and vibration sensitivities	Unlikely, minor	Low
Reduced car park availability	Access	Road users in Raymond Terrace	Very unlikely, minimal	Low	Construction and operation	-	-	Low



Impact to people	Social impact category	Affected parties	Impact likelihood and magnitude	Impact significance rating (non-enhanced / unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement / mitigation measures	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Residual impact significance
Interruption to power, water, and waste utilities	Access	Surrounding businesses and residents Health facility patients	Possible, moderate	Medium	Construction	CEMP and CSCP designed to address potential for supply interruptions	Unlikely, minor	Low



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Appendix A – Social impact categories (source: NSW DPHI, 2023)



