

Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009

Project Proposal Guidelines

Pursuant to section 16(1)

A project proponent for a declared project must prepare a project proposal for that project. A project proposal will inform the Minister for Planning's decision on the required assessment process as well as the setting of scoping directions for that process, for each declared project subject to Part 3 of the Act.

These guidelines are made by the Minister for Planning under section 16 of the *Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009* ('the Act') and provide guidance on the form and content of a project proposal, in light of the requirements set by section 5 of the Act.

Section 5 of the Act states that a project proposal is a document that contains all of the following—

- (a) a description of the declared project;*
- (b) designs prepared for the declared project;*
- (c) a description of the proposed project area, including—*
 - (i) the location of the proposed project area;*
 - (ii) the land that is likely to be required for the declared project;*
 - (iii) if relevant, the route the declared project is proposed to take;*
- (d) a description of the existing environment that may be impacted by the development and operation of the declared project;*
- (e) any applicable approvals or assessments under an applicable law that are likely to be required before the development for the declared project can commence;*
- (f) if relevant, any alternative options for the declared project that have been considered in the development of the project before it was declared to be a declared project;*
- (g) an outline of studies conducted in relation to the declared project and the study findings;*
- (h) an outline of any consultation that has been undertaken and results of the consultation;*
- (i) if relevant, a draft program for further consultation or studies in relation to an aspect of the declared project;*
- (j) if more than one project option is being considered for the purposes of the declared project, all of the matters specified in paragraphs (a) to (i) for each option.*

FORM OF PROJECT PROPOSAL

The project proposal shall be submitted to the Minister for Planning in the **form** of a report addressing the matters set out in the following sections. The report shall be ordered in the same general sequence as the contents set out below, and be provided in both hardcopy (three copies) and electronic formats (MS Word where possible).

A high standard of legibility is expected, including for diagrams and maps. Project proponents should have regard to the principles of writing in plain English in preparing the project proposal. Documents in electronic formats should be suitable for publishing on the internet.

CONTENT OF PROJECT PROPOSAL

The following sections 1 to 9 set out the Minister's guidance in relation to the **content** of a project proposal.

It is recognised that at the time of completing a project proposal a project will normally be at an early stage of planning and design and hence proponents will not have detailed information on some aspects of a project. However, where a proponent is able to provide a greater level of detail this will assist the setting of more focussed scoping directions. Proponents are encouraged to consult with the Department of Planning and Community Development during the preparation of a project proposal, including in relation to the level of design and environmental information that may be needed.

1. Description of the declared project

The project proposal should include the following:

- i. **Particulars of the proponent:** including the name and postal address of the entity(ies) responsible for the project and a key contact person, and each relevant persons' phone and facsimile numbers and e-mail address
- ii. **Title, purpose and objectives of the project:** the title of the project together with a statement of its intended purpose and related project objectives
- iii. **Strategic context of the project:** a summary of the policy and strategic planning context of the declared project, including any underpinning plans or studies¹
- iv. **Project components:** a brief description of key project components and their location
- v. **Ancillary or subsidiary activities:** an outline description of key ancillary or subsidiary activities relating to the project that are either being

¹ Any reference to 'studies' in sections 1 to 9 includes desktop studies.

developed or are proposed, including infrastructure or non-transport activities (including those for which parties other than the proponent are responsible), to the extent that these are known

- vi. **Proposed project program:** a statement of the proposed program for project implementation, including the expected time schedule for investigations, key decisions, project commencement and implementation stages, as well as the planned life of the project, to the extent that these can be estimated with reasonable confidence
- vii. **Project delivery approach:** a statement of the proposed governance and possible contractual approach for implementing the project, especially in the context of responsibilities for managing performance and/or impacts during project design, construction, operation and, where relevant, decommissioning.

2. Designs prepared for the project

The project proposal should provide design information that describes the concept, approximate location and functional components for the project, including, to the extent practicable:

- i. The broad concept for the project design
- ii. Indicative plans that show:
 - the maximum spatial envelope within which key project components would be developed, including the area that may be needed to accommodate project options or design variations
 - the general layout or arrangement of project components
 - points of access or network connections to existing transport infrastructure.
- iii. An outline description of the works and key physical changes to the environment that are expected to result from carrying out the project, including in relation to construction and operation of new infrastructure, as well as decommissioning of existing infrastructure (if relevant)
- iv. Any indicative design and environmental performance criteria for the project proposal that would guide the finalisation of the design and/or implementation of the project.

The above information should be provided in sufficient detail to enable broad identification of potential impacts of the project, in order to enable preparation of the scoping directions required for an Impact Management Plan or Comprehensive Impact Statement.

3. **Project alternatives**

If relevant, the project proposal is to describe the main alternatives for the declared project considered during the evolution of the project concept, as well as providing an explanation of the rationale for the preferred alternative, if this has been determined. At least an outline of available information on the technical feasibility and strategic merit of key project alternatives should be provided.

Project alternatives might be differentiated on the basis of location, site layout, project components, scale, capacity, technology, timing, staging, or other factors.

If more than one option is being considered for the purposes of the declared project, all of the information sought by these guidelines is to be provided for each option.

4. **Description of the proposed project area**

The project proposal is to incorporate a summary description of the **proposed project area**, as follows:

- i. **Location.** Plans and other relevant documentation showing the site(s) and surrounding areas within which the project is proposed to be located, including, where relevant and available:
 - terrain/topography
 - major water bodies, waterways and drainage systems
 - vegetation cover
 - known natural resources
 - existing land use
 - urban and rural settlement
 - transport and public infrastructure and services
 - sensitive environmental assets, including known cultural heritage places and flora/fauna protection areas
 - local government boundaries
 - zoning and overlay plans as detailed in the planning schemes applying to the area
 - any other relevant aspects.
- ii. **Land requirements.** Map(s) of at least 1:10,000 scale identifying the expected or potential project area that would be affected by the project, including key ancillary or subsidiary activities, if known. At least one set of maps should be superimposed over a satellite or aerial image base.

Site plans are required that:

- show the likely boundaries of the project area, in terms of the spatial envelope within which construction activities may occur

- show areas likely to be required for construction activities (including development footprint and work areas), if known
 - include sufficient grid references relative to the Australian Map Grid as well as latitude and longitude and an arrow to geographic north to ensure the location of the proposed project area is clear
 - show general ownership patterns within the proposed project area including freehold, crown and leasehold interests (if practicable)
 - identify those parts of the proposed project area that are reserved for a public purpose under a planning scheme or other law.
- iii. **Proposed route:** If relevant, identification of the proposed route, or alternative routes, for the declared project.

5. Description of the existing environment

The project proposal should include a description of the existing environment in the project area and adjoining areas (as relevant), in relation to the assets, uses and values of the environment that may be affected by the project, including:

- i. Physical environment (e.g. background noise levels)
- ii. Natural environment (e.g. flora and fauna, waterways)
- iii. Social environment (e.g. adjoining communities, landscape values)
- iv. Economic environment (e.g. land uses, economic activities).

This description of the existing environment should draw on existing information sources, but it may also be supported by preliminary studies to better characterise potentially sensitive aspects of the environment. It should document the sources and reliability of the information provided.

6. Potential impacts of the declared project on the existing environment

The project proposal is to provide a preliminary assessment, drawing on existing information and any initial studies, identifying the overall potential for the declared project to impact on the existing environment during construction, operation and decommissioning (where relevant). This assessment should reflect the potential maximum extent or severity of project impacts, unless well-defined mitigation measures have already been established as part of the project description. Details of investigations undertaken and the findings of studies should be provided.

This preliminary assessment should:

- i. If relevant, include an outline of available studies on project alternatives that have been investigated, and the findings of the studies in relation to potential impacts of these alternatives
- ii. Provide an outline of studies conducted on potential impacts of the declared project and their findings

- iii. In the context of studies (ii above), provide a systematic identification of potential project impacts on environmental assets, uses or values to result from project development, including associated works and activities. This assessment should, to the extent practicable:
 - Identify the potential for significant impacts, having regard to their nature, potential interactions and possible severity. Relevant types of impacts include direct and indirect impacts, transient and enduring impacts, as well as potential cumulative impacts of the project in combination with existing activities or known proposals. This assessment may be qualitative and based on aggregate information rather than requiring spatially-specific information
 - Be summarised in a matrix that describes the interaction of project works and activities with environmental assets, uses or values
 - Identify the relative priorities of potential impacts for further investigation, having regard to their possible significance and uncertainties in the prediction of these impacts.
- iv. Describe any proposed measures to avoid, minimise, manage or offset potential significant impacts on the existing environment, including any proposed environmental performance parameters or criteria.

7. Applicable approvals

The project proposal is to identify:

- i. Any applicable approvals under an applicable law (as listed in Column 1, Schedule 1 of the Act) already granted or established with respect to the declared project or components of the project (including under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Environment Protection Act 1970*, *Heritage Act 1995* and *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*)
- ii. Any applicable approvals under an applicable law either known to be required or potentially required before the declared project or components of it can commence
- iii. If relevant, whether all or some of the components of the declared project trigger the requirement for applicable approvals under an applicable law
- iv. Statutory objectives, criteria or policy under an applicable law that may need to be considered in the assessment of potential impacts of the declared project or components of it and/or complied with
- v. Whether the declared project has been referred under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and, if so, whether the project is a controlled action under that Act and, if not, whether it is intended to refer the project under that Act.

8. Outline of proposed studies

The project proposal is to provide an outline of a program for proposed studies to:

- i. Refine the siting, design and associated impact mitigation measures for the proposed project or relevant project options
- ii. Address uncertainties regarding the likely impacts or performance of the proposed project or relevant alternative options.

9. Outline of consultation

The project proposal is to provide an outline of any consultation with stakeholders or members of the public that has been undertaken, including:

- i. Consultation methods applied and stakeholders (in general terms) consulted
- ii. Results of the consultation, in terms of the key issues identified and any proposed responses.

In addition, the project proposal should provide an outline of a proposed program for providing information to the public and consulting stakeholders in conjunction with further studies of the declared project.

Note that in addition to the matters set out above, the proponent may provide any further detail or information in conjunction with the project proposal if they consider that this may assist the Minister for Planning in either determining whether assessment via a Comprehensive Impact Statement or Impact Management Plan is required under the Act or in preparing scoping directions under the Act.