

WebGIS Environmental Layers – standard environmental controls

Purpose

To outline the standard environmental controls which address environmental constraints for **low impact works**. These are identified via Ausgrid's WebGIS-Environmental Layers and/ or during site inspections.

Where the controls cannot be complied with, further assessment will be required to determine additional controls and possible approvals, licences or permits.

These standard environmental controls can also generally be found in:

- [NS174C Environmental Handbook](#) – under working near **sensitive areas**.
- Summary Environmental Report – for level 2 impacts (note: these controls may be altered depending on the project).

Standard controls are referenced in the [WebGIS Environmental Layers](#) through the 'Environmental report' button and 'What's here?' button

Environmental planning process

The environmental planning process can be determined using the [Environmental Planning Calculator](#) and will depend on:

1. what is being proposed (project scope),
2. where it will be undertaken, and
3. how it will be undertaken

Environmental features can be identified by generating a report using the [WebGIS Environmental Layers](#).

Generally, most new works will require an environmental impact assessment under the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This will typically take the form of a Summary Environmental Report (SER). The SER will detail specific controls for the works.

Generally routine maintenance, repairs and some replacement works will be exempt from the need for an environmental impact assessment. These works can be undertaken in accordance with the controls for low impact works and the Environmental Handbook. Where the minimum controls cannot be complied with, further assessment will be required to determine additional controls and possible approvals, licences or permits.

Figure 1 below provides for a flowchart of the environmental planning process.

More information

Contact Environmental Services at environmentalservices@ausgrid.com.au or on 9394 6659.

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1. Matters of national environmental significance (NES, Commonwealth)

Introduction

Matters of NES include nationally protected wetlands (RAMSAR), threatened species and communities, migratory species and heritage areas.

The controls for heritage are provided in Section 5.

Some activities will require referral to the Commonwealth for a decision on whether assessment and approval is required under the EPBC Act.

Controls for low impact works

- a) No works in undisturbed areas (including storing equipment in, parking vehicles on or accessing the worksite through an undisturbed area).
 - b) No disturbance of bush rock, tree hollows, wetlands, mangroves, nests, aquatic or other sensitive habitats.
 - c) Retain native ground cover vegetation.
 - d) No disturbance of remnant native vegetation unless works are for the purpose of vegetation maintenance, undertaken in accordance with Ausgrid's [TSMP](#) and clearing is to the minimum extent necessary to maintain existing and regularly maintained clearances (ie no new clearance envelopes).
 - e) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 6.1](#).
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Environmental Handbook

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (Commonwealth referral/approval).

If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

2. Biodiversity (NSW)

Introduction

Plants and animals are assessed if they are at risk of extinction. If the risk is high they are listed in legislation and conservation actions are developed for their protection.

Some wetlands and rainforests have inherent hydrological or ecological characteristics that are deemed worthy of protection.

NSW protected items include threatened species, ecological communities, areas of outstanding biodiversity value, Littoral Rainforests and Coastal Wetlands (including their proximity areas).

Some activities will require assessment and possible Minister approval.

Controls for low impact works

- a) No works in areas declared to be **Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value**.
 - b) No works in **Littoral Rainforests** or **Coastal Wetlands** unless the works are routine maintenance or emergency works and the impacts are restricted to the minimum possible. All other works will require an Environmental Impact Statement.
 - c) No works in Littoral Rainforest or Coastal Wetland **proximity areas** unless impacts are restricted to the minimum possible.
 - d) Works in **Littoral Rainforests, Coastal Wetlands** (including **proximity areas**), **ecological communities** or within proximity to **threatened species** are also subject to the controls below.
 - All workers to be made aware of ecologically sensitive areas and the need to avoid impacts.
 - No works in undisturbed areas (including storing equipment in, parking vehicles on or accessing the worksite through an undisturbed area).
 - No disturbance of bush rock, tree hollows, wetlands, mangroves, nests, aquatic or other sensitive habitats.
 - No use of pesticides.
 - No importing mulch from other sites.
 - No disturbance of remnant native vegetation unless works are for the purpose of vegetation maintenance, undertaken in accordance with Ausgrid's [TSMP](#) and clearing is to the minimum extent necessary to maintain existing and regularly maintained clearances (ie no new clearance envelopes).
 - Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 6.1](#).
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Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (such as SER or REF).

If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

3. Marine vegetation

Introduction	Marine vegetation, such as saltmarsh, mangroves, seagrasses, and macroalgae (seaweeds), provides shelter and nursery areas for aquatic animals and a hiding place from predators, and is an essential component of the food chain in estuarine and coastal environments. It also stabilises sediments and shorelines, and protects water quality in estuaries for recreational users.
Controls for low impact works	a) No impacts to key fish habitat. b) No impacts to marine vegetation unless in accordance with Ausgrid's permit for vegetation management works around mangroves. Conditions of the permit include notifications to DPI and preparation of a CEMP (refer to EF 560 Managing Marine Vegetation). Controls in the CEMP include: • restrictions on material storage and stockpiling • requirements for site restoration and clean up • machinery access requirements • incident reporting • no go areas and visual inspections c) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-Section 6.1.
Note	Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (such as SER or REF or permit). If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

4. Ecology Other

Introduction	Other protected areas along with related requirements are shown below. Note that RAMSAR Wetlands, AOBV, Coastal Wetlands and Littoral Rainforests are included as they form part of the Biodiversity Values Map (relevant for Part 4 assessments). Requirements for these are shown in other sections.
Controls for low impact works	a) BV Map - RAMSAR Wetlands – Refer to Section 1. b) BV Map - Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value (AOBV) ,Coastal Wetlands and Littoral Rainforests – Refer to Section 2. c) BV Map - Riparian land, identified old growth forests, identified rainforests, threatened species or communities and core koala habitat. • All workers to be made aware of ecologically sensitive areas and the need to avoid impacts. • No works in undisturbed areas (including storing equipment in, parking vehicles on or accessing the worksite through an undisturbed area). • No disturbance of bush rock, tree hollows, wetlands, mangroves, nests, aquatic or other sensitive habitats. • Retain native ground cover vegetation. • No importing mulch from other sites. • No disturbance of remnant native vegetation unless works are for the purpose of vegetation maintenance, undertaken in accordance with Ausgrid's TSMP and clearing is to the minimum extent necessary to maintain existing and regularly maintained clearances (ie no new clearance envelopes). • Comply with the general controls in NS174C-Section 6.1. d) Marine parks, aquatic / nature reserves, declared wilderness areas, wild rivers and State Forests/Crown Timber Land - No works unless complying with conditions of a licence/easement. e) Biodiversity stewardship sites, wildlife refuge areas, conservation agreement areas and RMS biodiversity offset areas – No works unless complying with Ausgrid's BCT exemption (for maintenance and emergency works in BCT areas). Other works may require Minister consent. f) National parks – No new works. For other works, comply with the NPWS protocol for inspection and maintenance works. Conditions include: • Provide at least 4 days' notice for inspection works (unless undertaken by foot or passenger vehicle and do not require the use of equipment) using EGN 540 Ausgrid Notification to National Parks template. • Provide at least 2 weeks' notice and a CRA for maintenance works. The CRA template can be generated from the WebGIS Environmental Layers. • Provide notice as soon as practicable after any emergency.
Note	Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (such as SER or REF). If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

5. Non-Aboriginal heritage

Introduction	Non-Aboriginal heritage includes items and places that are valued because of their historical, archaeological, cultural or architectural significance. Heritage can include buildings, cobblestone roads, sandstone gutters, trees, parks, electrical equipment and archaeological sites. Classes of heritage significance include Local, State, National and World.
Controls for low impact works	a) Impacts to Commonwealth or World or National heritage could require a heritage assessment and/or approval, unless works involve only minor repairs and maintenance to electrical infrastructure or the site's management plan states that the area or item does not embody heritage values. b) Impacts to State heritage items Interim Heritage Orders require a heritage assessment and/or approval, unless in accordance with an approved conservation management plan or in accordance with a S57 exemption or Ausgrid specific exemption. c) More than minor or inconsequential impacts to local heritage or heritage conservation areas listed by Council require a statement of heritage impact, written notification to council and due consideration of council's response. d) Excavating any land which is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed requires a S140 excavation permit, unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with a S139 exception. e) Impacts to Ausgrid's movable heritage (Tier 1) require approval by Environmental Services in accordance with EF 17440 Movable heritage form. f) Impacts to Ausgrid's movable heritage (Tier 2) require a Photographic Archival Recording in accordance with EF 17440. g) Demolition, removal or sale of heritage items on Ausgrid's S170 register (Ausgrid employees) requires 14 days written notice to NSW Heritage. h) Impacts to potential heritage items such as sandstone gutters, cobblestone roads or sandstone walls require a heritage assessment. i) Where possible, avoid impacts to Sydney Water S170 register items. Further information can be obtained on Sydney Water's website or via their environmental team on 8849 5936. j) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-Section 7.2.
Heritage discoveries	All works to stop immediately and restrict access if potential non-Aboriginal heritage is discovered. Ausgrid and PLUS ES employees should contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.
Note	Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (such as SER or REF or Heritage Council approval). If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

6. Aboriginal cultural heritage

Introduction

Aboriginal cultural heritage includes artefacts, objects and places with evidence of Aboriginal occupation or with special cultural significance. These can include artefacts, middens, axe-grinding or tool sharpening grooves, scarred or carved trees, paintings, rock engravings and burial sites.

Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits (AHIPs) are permits that allow the Applicant to harm Aboriginal objects or places. They are a key mechanism within the Aboriginal culture and heritage management regime of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act).

AHIPs that apply to an area may indicate that Aboriginal artefacts, objects or places are within that area.

The Commonwealth Minister can declare a place under Sections 9 and 10 of the ATSIHP Act where they are of the view that the area is not adequately protected under NSW legislation.

Controls for low impact works

Aboriginal cultural heritage, and AHIP areas

- a) All workers to be made aware of Aboriginal heritage sensitive areas and the need to avoid impacts.
- b) No ground disturbance or tree removal.
- c) No disturbance of rock outcrops (including from plant and machinery movements).
- d) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 7.1](#).

Section 9/10 declaration areas

- e) Contact Environmental Services. It is an offence to injure desecrate use treat pass through or enter this land in a manner that is inconsistent with Aboriginal tradition.

Heritage discoveries

Stop work immediately and restrict access if potential Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered.

Ausgrid and PLUS ES employees should contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental planning approval (such as an Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment or Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit).

If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

7. Steep or highly erodible land and protected riparian land

Introduction

Riparian land is the land that runs along rivers, creeks, estuaries, lakes and wetlands. Riparian land can vary in width from a narrow strip to a wide corridor.

Steep or highly erodible land is land that is greater than 1 hectare with a slope equal to or greater than 18 degrees.

Maintenance of tree cover on certain land is covered by legislation.

Controls for low impact works

- a) All workers to be made aware of sensitive areas (drainage lines, grates, drains, inlets, exposed surfaces, areas subject to bogging and waterways) and the need to avoid impacts.
 - b) Manage worksite to prevent:
 - erosion (e.g. minimise ground disturbance, provide ground cover, avoid or cover stockpiles, divert surface water around disturbed areas)
 - sediment or unclean water leaving the site (e.g. install sediment controls, clean vehicles leaving the worksite, inspect and maintain controls, restore surfaces).
 - c) No ground disturbance > 50m²
 - d) No vegetation removal on category 2 regulated land (**Steep or highly erodible land** or **protected riparian land**).
 - e) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 2.1](#).
-

Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require a specific management plan (such as an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan).

If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

8. Contamination

Introduction

Exposure to contaminated soil or water, such as when excavating, can pose a risk for workers and the public. Contamination can also harm the environment and impact infrastructure such as cables, conduits and footings.

Controls for low impact works - contamination

- a) No ground disturbance within an area of known or where there are indicators of contaminated land unless the works have been assessed/approved.
 - b) All workers to be made aware of the presence of known and suspected contaminated land.
 - c) All workers to monitor areas for indicators of contaminated land
 - unusual odours (such as fuels, solvents, rotten egg gas)
 - oil staining or oil sheen in groundwater
 - underground storage tanks (UST)
 - buried waste (such as asbestos in soil, construction waste, containers)
 - imported fill (such as ash, coke, slag, coal tar, asbestos)
 - unusually coloured material (such as green clay)
 - 132kV transmission cable trenches installed before 1980.
 - d) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 5.1](#).
-

Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require an environmental management plan to ensure contamination material is suitably managed and handled

If in doubt, contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

9. Hazardous materials

Introduction	Asbestos fibres must be prevented from becoming airborne. The presence of asbestos must be assessed and where identified, managed in accordance with training, PPE, licencing, record keeping, notification, bagging, transport, tracking, disposal and specific work instruction requirements. The presence of lead must be assessed, stored, handled, transported and disposed in accordance with legal requirements and specific work instructions.
Controls for low impact works – asbestos	a) All workers are made aware of the presence of known and suspected Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) or lead. • Ausgrid workers can access the Asbestos Register for the site on The Wire or via the icon on their iPad. • For external contractors and ASP's, a copy of the Asbestos Register for the site can be provided by the relevant Project Manager. b) All works with the potential to disturb ACM must be undertaken in accordance with NS 211 and relevant training. • Working with ACM requires asbestos training and associated PPE. • No removal of > 10m² of non-friable asbestos without a LAR and LAA. • No removal of friable asbestos without a LAR and LAA (unless allowed by an exemption for Ausgrid employees). • Notify site occupants and neighbouring properties of the commencement date and expected duration of any asbestos removal work. • At the completion of works complete and submit Hazmat Remediation & Removal Form (HRR) to Hazmat@ausgrid.com.au. c) All works with the potential to disturb lead must be undertaken in accordance with HS014-P0100 Workplace Hazardous Materials (for Ausgrid employees) or relevant SWMS. • Arrange cleaning of the proposed work area prior to works commencing (where works might disturb surface dust or paint). • Wear appropriate PPE. Minimum requirements typically include: – disposable half face respirator with a P2 particulate filter or other respirator as determined by a successful 'fit test' – disposable or wipeable gloves – Type 5, Category 3 coveralls – safety gumboots or lace-less safety boots (non-suede). • Practice good personal hygiene – no eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking or practice that involves the potential for hand to mouth transfer. d) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-Section 3.1 and Section 3.4
Note	If any works cannot meet the above controls, contact the Hazmat Hotline on 9394 6961.

10. Acid sulfate soils

Introduction

Acid sulfate soils (ASS) are naturally occurring soils and sediments that contain iron sulfides. They are generally found in low lying areas and near waterways such as rivers, estuaries, wetlands and mangroves.

When ASS is exposed to air, such as by excavating or lowering the water table, the iron sulfides can oxidise to form sulfuric acid. The acid can harm aquatic life, impact groundwater and corrode infrastructure.

ASS must be stored, handled, treated and disposed in accordance with legal requirements.

Controls for low impact works

- a) All works impacting ASS will require an ASSMP. The risk will depend on the class of ASS and the depth/size of excavation (refer to flow chart in [NS174C](#)).
 - b) For medium risk projects, Ausgrid employees can use [EWMS 167](#). Key controls include:
 - minimise ground disturbance
 - minimise the excavation depth
 - minimise the time that soil is exposed to air by staging works and storing soil in a lined and covered skip bin or wrapped in plastic (outside of the zone of influence)
 - re-bury soil to the same depth from which it was excavated, where practicable. In some cases, treatment will be required
 - arrange required testing and treatment prior to disposal.
 - c) For high risk projects, a site-specific ASSMP will be required. in accordance with the [ASS Assessment Guidelines](#).
 - d) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 5.2](#).
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Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require a specific management plan (such as an Acid Sulfate Soil Management Plan).

If in doubt, contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

11. Climate change adaptation

Introduction

Climate change is resulting in more frequent extreme weather events such as heatwaves, bushfires, droughts, storms and flooding as well as gradual changes such as higher sea levels and higher mean high tides. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that based on current emission trends, the sea level will rise 60-110cm by 2100¹.

Flood areas are areas where flood related development controls apply and includes the following four areas:

- **Flood planning area.** The area lower than the Flood Planning Level (FPL). The FPL is generally the 1% AEP plus an appropriate freeboard (typically an additional 0.5m)
- 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood (1 in 100 year flood)
- Probable Maximum Flood (PMF). The largest flood that could possibly occur (known as flood liable land, floodplain or flood prone land).
- Historical flood levels.

Coastal vulnerability areas include areas subject to coastal hazards such as coastal erosion and tidal inundation.

Areas below **projected sea level rise** (1m above mean high-water mark) are likely to be submerged this century.

Controls for low impact works

- a) Kiosk substations should not be installed in **flood areas** or below **projected sea level rise** (1m above mean high-water mark) unless Ausgrid determines there is no reasonable alternative.
- b) Avoid siting infrastructure in **flood areas**, **coastal vulnerability areas**, or below **projected sea level rise** (1m above mean high-water mark) where reasonably practicable.
- c) When siting infrastructure within the **flood planning area** comply with all relevant Network Standards, including:
 - [NS113 Site selection and construction design requirements for chamber substations](#)
 - [NS141 Site selection and site preparation standards for kiosk type substations](#)

Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and may require a specialist assessment and/or approval from Ausgrid's Asset Management Group.

¹ [IPCC](#): "Sea level will continue to rise for centuries. It could reach around 30-60 cm by 2100 even if greenhouse gas emissions are sharply reduced and global warming is limited to well below 2°C, but around 60-110 cm if greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase strongly."

12. Mine subsidence

Introduction Approval from Subsidence Advisory NSW (SANSW) is required to alter or erect structures within a mine subsidence district or to subdivide land within such areas. An 'improvement' includes any building work or structure on the land, such as formed roads, streets, paths, walkways, driveways, and any pipeline, water, sewer, telephone, gas, or other service main, whether above or below the ground.

Ausgrid activities that do not involve altering or erecting structures do not require SANSW approval. This includes emergency works, routine maintenance, and the co-location of cabling above or below ground on or within existing infrastructure.

Controls for low impact works

a) Contact SANSW (subsidenceadvisory@customerservice.nsw.gov.au) for works in mine subsidence areas involving structures and excavations unless:

- The works are emergency works routine maintenance works or co-location of cabling on or within existing infrastructure.
- The works are on the SANSW exempt development list (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/subsidence-advisory/development>), including pole replacements (refer to note below) and new kiosks.

For new distribution lines/PTs, SANSW have advised that they are happy to accept a quick email advising of the nature of the works. In most cases they will respond that no approval will be required.

Note **NOTE:** Pole replacements with larger poles/deeper footings in areas listed below (mine workings less than 20m from the surface) should be referred to SANSW.

- Merewether Heights
- North Lambton
- Lambton
- Wallsend
- Waratah
- Ashtonfield
- Greta
- Green Point (Near Valentine)
- Adamstown Heights

Alternatively, you can check the parcel of land next to the work area on the NSW Planning portal (www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/spatialviewer/) to see which areas are subject to Guideline 1 and Guideline 7.

13. Sydney Harbour Foreshore Area

Introduction

Place Management NSW is a statutory corporation with functions including:

- protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the foreshore area
 - promote, coordinate, manage, undertake and secure the orderly and economic development and use of the foreshore area, including the provision of infrastructure.
-

Controls for low impact works

a) No ground disturbance or vegetation impacts in protected harbour foreshore areas unless impacts from works are the minimum extent necessary and are for the purposes of:

- the installation of electricity works, or
 - the alteration, maintenance or removal of existing electricity work, or
 - maintaining reasonable safety clearances under powerlines, conductors and related structures and around communication sites associated with the supply of electricity.
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Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require further assessment and most likely a permit from Place Management NSW.

If in doubt, contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

14. Sydney Olympic Park Area

Introduction	The Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) is a statutory corporation with responsibilities for the day-to-day management of 430 hectares of parklands and 7 sporting venues. This includes the management of buildings, facilities and landscape assets; delivery of programs and events; conservation of water, energy and resources; and the protection of ecosystems, environment and heritage. Authorisation is required for certain activities to avoid causing safety risks for events at the parklands.
Controls for low impact works	a) No ground disturbance or vegetation impacts unless authorisation is received from SOPA. Authorisation can be obtained by emailing mark.farran@sopa.nsw.gov.au. Mark can also be contacted on 0439 489 615.
Note	For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

15. Special Water Catchment Area

Introduction	Special water catchment areas are large areas of mostly unspoilt bushland surrounding reservoirs that provide drinking water. They are vital to the protection of drinking water because they help filter out pollutants before the water reaches the reservoir.
Controls for low impact works	a) All workers to be made aware of special catchment areas and the need to avoid impacts. b) No using pesticides, herbicides or other chemicals without approval from the relevant water authority. c) No handling of oils or fuels including the refuelling of plant and equipment without approval from the relevant water authority. d) All vehicles working within the catchment area must carry an appropriate spill kit. e) Sydney Special Catchment areas – no works allowed unless consent received from WaterNSW. f) Council controlled catchment areas – contact the local council for requirements. g) Hunter Water Catchment – prior notification is required for: • new power lines outside of an existing easement or alignment (including underground lines) • new pole top substations or kiosk substations • replacement kiosk or pole top substations in a substantially different location • any new zone or sub-transmission substation
Note	For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

16. Crown Land

Introduction	Land Rights legislation is in place to compensate Aboriginal people for the loss of land which has occurred over successive generations. Through local land councils, land claims can be made for the benefit of their members to claim back land for community purposes. The land must be unused crown land and not required for public purpose.
Controls for low impact works	a) Works on Crown lands will require referral to Ausgrid's property section to determine tenure unless the works are: • on public roads or reserves • required to maintain, repair or replace an existing asset within an existing developed footprint or easement on Crown land. If additional disturbance is required outside the existing developed footprint, or if an asset is being upgraded, the works must be referred to Ausgrid's property section.
Note	For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Ausgrid's Property section.

17. Sydney Harbour Catchment Area

Introduction	The State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) (replaces Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005) is in place to ensure Sydney Harbour is recognised, protected, enhanced and maintained. It has a number of aims including protecting ecology, preserving and enhancing views and improving access to the public. It requires public authorities to take into consideration a number of factors when planning activities.
Controls for low impact works	a) All workers to be made aware of sensitive areas (drainage lines, grates, drains, inlets, exposed surfaces, areas subject to bogging and waterways) and the need to avoid impacts. b) Manage worksite to prevent sediment and unclean water leaving the site (such as minimise ground disturbance, sediment controls, clean vehicles leaving the site, inspect and maintain controls, restore surfaces etc.). c) No damaging seagrass, saltmarsh, and mangrove communities d) No disturbance of contaminated land or contaminated sediments e) When planning works give consideration to: • retaining, rehabilitating and restoring riparian land, • maintaining a vegetative buffer to protect wetlands, • maintaining public access to and along the foreshore, without adversely impacting on watercourses, wetlands, riparian lands or remnant vegetation, • maintaining, protecting or enhancing views to and from Sydney Harbour
Note	For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

18. State Significant Development sites

Introduction Some development on identified sites is classified as State Significant Development under SEPP (Precincts) - various. Identified sites include Sydney Olympic Park, Darling Harbour, the Bays Precinct and Barangaroo.

The Minister for Planning (and in some cases the Independent Planning Commission) is the consent authority for SSD applications.

Controls for low impact works a) Ministerial consent is required for development on State Significant Sites exceeding certain thresholds.

The thresholds are typically >\$10M however it depends on the site.

Details here > [SEPP \(Precincts - XXX\)](#)

Note For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

19. Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation sites

Introduction The **Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme** is designed to lessen the effects of flooding on both rural and urban areas, reducing flood damage by modifying flood behaviour.

Consent is required for construction works within a certain distance of mitigation infrastructure.

Controls for low impact works

- a) No construction works within 10m of a **Levee** without approval
- b) No construction works within 10m of a **Drainage Channel** without approval
- c) No construction works within 50m of a **Spillway** without approval

Approval can be obtained by emailing Info.hvfms@environment.nsw.gov.au – marked attention Ian Jackson – Flood Plain Engineer.

Note

For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

20. Access tracks

Introduction

Poor maintenance or use of access tracks can lead to safety issues or erosion (leading to pollution of waters).

Controls for low impact works

- a) Check the condition of access tracks before use and report any issues such as erosion, blocked access or dumped waste.
 - b) Lock gates when leaving the access track.
 - c) Keep to the access track and avoid entering undisturbed areas.
 - d) Where practicable avoid using access tracks during wet weather. If unavoidable assess the track suitability and implement controls to effectively mitigate any impacts.
 - e) Prior to using access tracks, ensure vehicles and equipment are free of weeds, mud and soil to prevent the spread of weeds and pathogens (see NS174C-[Section 6.3](#)).
 - f) Routine maintenance of tracks must be in accordance with [NSW Erosion and sediment control on unsealed roads](#).
 - g) Maintenance of access tracks in national park estate will require a conservation risk assessment (CRA) to be submitted to NPWS.
 - h) No new access tracks or upgrades to existing tracks.
-

Note

Works that cannot meet the above controls will require a specialist assessment and most likely an environmental planning approval (such as SER or REF).
If in doubt contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

21. Licences and Trade Waste Permits

Introduction

Ausgrid has an Environment Protection Licence for the storage of waste oil and PCBs at Homebush Depot. Ausgrid also has a PCB licence which contains additional requirements for the transport, handling and storage of PCB waste and material – refer to 22. PCBs.

Ausgrid has trade waste permits for washbays at a number of depots.

Controls for low impact works

- a) Comply with **licence** conditions when working at Homebush Depot. Conditions include:
- Notifying the depot manager in the event of an incident.
 - Carry out activities in a competent manner, maintain plant and equipment, have an emergency response plan, separate wastes for recycling, bund/contain above ground tanks, and have suitable measures in place to prevent spills.
 - Specific requirements applying to storage and handling of PCBs.
- b) Use of **washbays** needs to comply with the permit from the relevant sewerage authority. Typical requirements include:
- Only wash water is to enter the washbay drain (such as no oil, hydraulic fluid or degreaser).
 - Use only 'quick break' detergents to allow any oil in the water to be quickly separated from the water (allows the oil to rise to the surface and form larger droplets allowing for better removal by the plate separator).
 - Clean up oil and chemical spills and leaks immediately using spill absorbents.
 - Remove debris from the washbay slab and drain after each use and appropriately dispose.
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Note

For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

22. PCBs

Introduction

PCBs may be present in transformers, current transformers (CTs), voltage transformers (VTs), oil circuit breakers (OCBs), fluid filled cables and lighting capacitors.

PCBs must be prevented from entering the environment. PCBs must be classified, stored, handled, transported and disposed in accordance with legal requirements. Labelling and licensing is required for the transport and storage of certain PCB wastes.

Controls for low impact works

- a) Clearly label PCB waste and have appropriate spill kits, response procedures and PPE accessible.
- b) Store PCB material in bunded and secure areas.
- c) Comply with the general controls in NS174C-[Section 3.2](#)

Scheduled PCBs (PCB concentration $\geq$ 50ppm)

- d) Store in a bunded area which is roofed with no drainage outlets, in a secured storage area to prevent unlawful entry and located at least 12 m away from flammable or combustible liquids, suitably labelled, and have an appropriate spill kit and PPE accessible.
- e) When transporting Scheduled PCBs workers must carry specific PPE, safety equipment, and transport documents (Manifest). Australian Dangerous Goods (ADG) Code requirements apply (eg placarding, emergency information, licensing etc.) [depending on weights and capacity](#).
- f) If oil volume $>1,100\text{L}$ remove from service within 5 years of test date.
- g) If scrapping and $>1,100\text{L}$ arrange collection directly from site using a PCB licenced company.
- h) If scrapping and $\leq 1,100\text{L}$ either take to a depot and store in a bunded area, or arrange collection by a PCB licensed company.

Non-scheduled PCBs $> 2\text{ppm}$ & $< 50\text{ppm}$

- i) If scrapping either take to a depot and store in a bunded area, or arrange collection by a PCB licensed company.

PCB level unknown – older than 1997

- j) If scrapping and $>1,100\text{L}$, either test or arrange collection directly from site using a PCB licenced company.
- k) If scrapping and $\leq 1,100\text{L}$ either test, take to a depot and store in a bunded area, or arrange collection by a PCB licensed company.

Note

If any works cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

23. Classified roads

Introduction Classified roads fall into three major categories, State roads, regional roads and local roads. They include freeways, state highways, main roads, tourist roads and collector roads.

If works are proposed on a classified road, consent and a road occupancy licence will be required.

Controls for low impact works

For works on a **TfNSW classified road**:

- a) Apply for consent from TfNSW (State roads) or the relevant local council (regional roads and local roads) to request approval, providing a description of the work and including a plan showing the extent of the works.
- b) Apply for a road occupancy licence (ROL) as outlined in Appendix 6 of the [memorandum of understanding \(MoU\) between Ausgrid and TfNSW \(Ausgrid employees\)](#).
- c) For out of hours work, comply with the general controls in NS174C Section 4.2.

An ROL is required in the Sydney region for all classified state roads, classified regional roads, and local roads within 100 m of a traffic signal or a classified state road, and in the Hunter region for all classified state roads.

Ausgrid employees should use the relevant templates from Appendix 1 of [Ausgrid's Procedure to Seek Consent Under Section 138 of the Roads Act](#).

24. Radio frequency antennas

Introduction

Radio communications systems use the radio frequency (RF) part of the electromagnetic spectrum between 3 kilohertz (kHz) and 300 gigahertz (GHz). These include television, AM and FM radio broadcasting, mobile phones and their base stations, paging services, cordless phones, baby monitors, and emergency and rural communication systems.

Heating of body tissues is possible if exposed to RF electromagnetic energy (EME) above recommended exposure limits. Shocks are also possible if touching an energised RF transmitter.

Public exposure limits are set to protect the public and form the basis of exclusion zones. These typically extend a few meters out from the antenna, but in some cases can be more. Look for signage near the antenna.

Controls for low impact works

Where work may come within an antenna's general public exclusion zone:

- a) Workers must comply with [NS102 Working on or near poles with telecommunication transmitters](#) which requires notification, de-energisation, testing, confirmation and isolation of mobile phone transmitter antennas.
 - b) Additional site-specific information can be found at www.rfnsa.com.au using the detail provided on Ausgrid's WebGIS-Environmental Layers.
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25. Bushfire prone land

Introduction	Bushfire prone land means land identified by local council which can support a bushfire or is subject to bushfire attack. Bushfire prone land maps are certified by the Commissioner of the RFS. Additional precautions should be considered and discussed as part of the HAC process. Live works on bushfire prone land during a Total Fire Ban will need to be postponed or comply with a number of exemption/notification requirements. Section 63(1) of the Rural Fires Act 1997 (NSW) requires public authorities to take all notified steps (if any) and any other practicable steps to prevent the occurrence of bushfires on, and to minimise the danger of the spread of bushfire.
Controls for low impact works	For live works in bushfire prone land (or hot works in the open) during a Total Fire Ban either: a) Postpone the works or use alternative methods (preferred option), or b) If an exemption is gazetted for that day, comply with the exemption/notification requirements. For more information refer to NS174C Section 6.4. Where there are no reasonably practical alternatives for siting assets in bushfire prone land additional controls will apply. Examples of these controls include increased vegetation clearances, more regular inspections, installation of LV spacers etc. Some relevant Network Standards include: a) NS179 Vegetation Management b) NS187 Fire Mitigation Design of Major Substations c) NS 125 Construction of LV Overhead Mains

26. Sensitive environmental feature layer

Introduction	The sensitive environmental feature layer is used to record specific information not otherwise available on the other data layers. Examples include contaminated land, Aboriginal heritage, sensitive ecology, areas containing known pathogens, previous incidents, and restricted areas.
Controls for low impact works	a) Where impacts are not clearly avoidable contact Environmental Services for more information. environmentalservices@ausgrid.com.au or on 9394 6659.

27. Easements, leases, or rights of way

Introduction	Wherever practicable, network assets are located in public roads or public reserves (such as parks). Where Network distribution assets are to be located on private land, Ausgrid requires legal protection for these assets through the acquisition of tenure, including easements, leases, or rights of way. An interest in land does not necessarily give Ausgrid exclusive right to the land - the owner is generally only prevented from doing anything that could restrict Ausgrid's use of the interest, or create a safety hazard for themselves or others.
Controls for low impact works	a) Works undertaken in easements, lease and rights of way should be consistent with the terms of the instrument.

28. Powerful owls

Introduction Powerful owls are a NSW listed threatened species. Their breeding season is April to October.

Disturbing nesting owls can lead to owls abandoning the nest and their young. Powerful owls have also attacked people while defending their nests.

The preferred time for carrying out vegetation and noisy works is November to March - outside of the breeding season.

Controls for low impact works

General Conditions (all year round):

- a) All workers to be made aware of powerful owl breeding territories in the area.
- b) No noisy works (chainsaw or mulching) one hour before sunset or one hour after sunrise.
- c) Retain large hollow-bearing trees (tree diameter > 80cm) and hollows > 30cm diameter.
- d) Retain all hollows and all horizontal perching branches of 4-10cm diameter in flyways (i.e. overhanging creeks and tracks).
- e) Avoid trimming of horizontal branches within 1m of tree hollows where possible.
- f) Avoid vegetation trimming that opens the canopy in riparian zones (up to 15m from a creek/riverbank) where possible.
- g) Report powerful owl incidents to Environmental Services on 02 9394 6659.

Breeding Season: April to October (in addition to the General Conditions above):

- h) Notify Birdlife Australia at least 2 weeks prior to works commencing on both (03) 9347 0757 and powerfulowl@birdlife.org.au.
 - i) Undertake an inspection for nesting owls and delay works if owls are detected.
 - j) No noisy works (chainsaw or mulching).
 - k) Comply with NS174C 6.2 Wildlife.
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Note For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

29. Local Government Area

Introduction Prior to commencing certain types of works, notification must be provided to the local council in accordance with the Electricity Supply Act and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure).

All responses received from the council must be given due consideration as part of the planning and execution process.

Controls for low impact works

Electricity Supply Act

A minimum of 40 days' notice must be given to the local council before commencing any works.

Exceptions: Routine repairs, maintenance, and emergency works do not require notification.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure)

A minimum of 21 days' notice must be provided to the local council for the following types of works, unless classified as 'Exempt development' (typically repairs and maintenance).

This 21-day notice can be combined with the 40-day notice under the Electricity Supply Act if applicable.

- a) Works will have a substantial impact on stormwater management services provided by local council
 - b) Works are likely to generate traffic to an extent that will strain the capacity of the road system
 - c) Works involve connection to, and a substantial impact on, the capacity of a sewerage system
 - d) Works involve connection to, and use of a substantial volume of water from, any part of a water supply system owned by a council
 - e) Works involve the installation of a temporary structure that is likely to cause disruption to pedestrian or vehicular traffic that is not minor or inconsequential
 - f) Works involve excavation that is not minor or inconsequential of the surface of, or a footpath adjacent to, a road for which a local council is the roads authority
 - g) Works is likely to affect the heritage significance of a local heritage item, or of a heritage conservation area, that is not also a State heritage item in a way that is more than minor or inconsequential
 - h) Works for the purpose of an existing or new substation
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Note

For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

30. Rivers, lakes and estuaries

Introduction	The Water Management Act 2000 (NSW) regulates activities that may affect the health, stability, flow, or water quality of waterways. Controlled Activity Approvals are established under s 91 of the Act as one of two “activity approvals”.
Controls for low impact works	A Controlled Activity Approval is required for: 1. Works on waterfront land, or 2. Works penetrating/interfering with an aquifer <u>Exemptions:</u> Schedule 4, part 6 of the regulation, approval is not required if: i) CI 59 Works are construction or use of fencing, or of a vehicular crossing or an access track, that does not impound water, and relate to a minor stream in a rural zone other than RU5. j) CI 63 Works on waterfront land where the river is fully concrete lined or a fully enclosed pipe channel. k) CI 65 Works are necessary for the preservation, repair or upkeep of a building or structure lawfully constructed, other than additions, enhancements, or expansions. Waterfront land means within: a) a river, measured from the highest bank, or b) a lake, measured from the shore, or c) an estuary, measured from the mean high water mark. Note: an estuary is all waters potentially affected by ocean tides (eg Lake Macquarie, Port Hacking River, Cooks River, Tuggerah Lakes) Note: Waterfront land is typically defined to include the land 40m from a river, lake and estuary. However, under CI64 of the Reg Ausgrid is exempt from CCA for works on this land. Minor stream means: a) is not a third order or higher stream under the Strahler system, and b) does not maintain a visible continuous flow Mean high water mark means the average position of high tide over time and represents the legal boundary between land and tidal waters. Land below MHW is generally Crown land, exceptions include Sydney Harbour, Botany Bay, and Port Hunter where it is TfNSW. The highest predictable tide under average weather is ~+0.5m. More information see https://www.water.dcceew.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/la-controlled-activity-approval-exemptions-fact-sheet.pdf Note For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659.

31. Flying-fox camps

Introduction	Flying-fox camps are critical ecological assets because flying-foxes are key pollinators and seed dispersers that support the health, regeneration and connectivity of native forests across eastern Australia, often moving long distances between regions and states. In NSW, all flying-foxes are protected native animals under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, and it is an offence to harm or disturb them or their camps unless actions are authorised. Grey-headed flying-foxes are listed as threatened species under both NSW and Commonwealth legislation. Mid-September to December is the Grey-headed Flying-fox breeding season.
Controls for low impact works	a) Inspections – Undertake a pre works check to confirm camp status, with ongoing monitoring during works. Activities will be modified or paused if signs of flying-fox stress or disturbance are observed. b) Avoidance and buffers – where possible locate works, access routes and compounds to maximise separation from camp areas and avoid noisy works within 30m of any flying-foxes. c) Timing – Where possible schedule works to avoid breeding season (mid-September to December) and extreme heat >38°C, limit activities near camps to daylight hours unless otherwise justified. d) Noise and lighting management – minimise noise, vibration and artificial lighting near camps through equipment selection, operational controls, and shielding/direction of lighting away from roosting areas. e) Vegetation protection – no vegetation impacts or maintenance to active camps.
Note	For works that cannot meet the above controls contact Environmental Services on 9394 6659. More information see https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/native-animals/native-animal-facts/land-mammals/flying-foxes
