NELP TECHNICAL NOTE

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER: 38

DATE: 30 July 2019

LOCATION: Greensborough Highway road reserve and electricity transmission corridor, Watsonia

EES/MAP BOOK REFERENCE: Draft Incorporated Document

SUBJECT: Development of replacement transmission towers as preparatory works under clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document

NOTE: 1. This Technical Note has been prepared to introduce and explain a proposed amendment to clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document to enable the relocation of two transmission towers to be undertaken as preparatory buildings and works.

REQUEST: N/A

RESPONSE: N/A

CORRESPONDENCE: N/A

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A - Amendment of clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document

Attachment B - Communication and Engagement Summary

Attachment C - copy of Fact Sheet
Attachment A - Amendment of clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explain an amendment proposed by NELP to clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document for the purpose of enabling the relocation of two existing electricity transmission towers within an existing easement as preparatory buildings and works for North East Link.

2. Design response

Construction of the reference project that has been assessed in the EES would require a pair of electricity transmission towers located in the road reserve of Greensborough Road, adjacent to the Watsonia Railway Station car park, to be relocated. This is required to make space for project infrastructure, an upgraded Greensborough Road and upgraded car parking at Watsonia Railway Station.

It is proposed to relocate the two transmission towers within the existing electricity easement to the east of Greensborough Road.

Relocation of the towers would not require any widening or extension of the existing easement with all works to be undertaken within the existing easement area.

The following constraints apply to the design and siting of the relocated towers:

- clearances to existing residential buildings adjacent to the easement must be maintained;
- certain distances need to be maintained between each set of towers and the lines must be at an appropriate height to ensure they do not sway in an unsafe manner;
- the overall number of towers within the easement should not increase;
- compulsory acquisition of land should be minimized, which is a key principle for the project as a whole.

An alternative design option, to replace the overhead line section with underground cable, is not feasible due to cost, land acquisition requirements and technical reasons. To underground the power lines, two large transition towers that transfer the power lines from above ground to below ground would need to be built and surrounded by safety compounds. This would require significant additional land and acquisition of adjacent homes would be required.

3. Timing requirements

The works for the relocation of the transmission towers must commence on or around 1 April 2020 to ensure completion of the relocation works in 2020. This is because works on the transmission network can only be undertaken during the winter months (between April and October) of any given year due to restrictions which apply over the summer months, due to demands on the network.

The relocation works are also reliant on a rail occupation which has been scheduled for August 2020 in agreement with key stakeholders. There are activities for the works that would need to be completed before and after the rail occupation in order to commission the new transmission towers prior to October 2020.
If the relocation works cannot commence on or around 1 April 2020, there is a significant risk of a 6-12 month delay to North East Link. This is because the works would then need to be postponed until April 2021.

4. **Current approval requirements**

Buildings and works to develop the replacement transmission towers would amount to development of ‘permanent above-ground buildings and structures’ for the purposes of the exhibited version of the draft Incorporated Document.

This means that under the exhibited version of the draft Incorporated Document, an Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) would need to be approved by the Minister for Planning before any replacement works could lawfully commence.

It is estimated that it may take until late June 2020 to prepare a UDLP and obtain approval from the Minister for Planning. It is not possible to expedite the UDLP approval process because a draft UDLP cannot satisfy the requirements of clause 4.7.3 of the exhibited draft Incorporated Document until EMF and UDS have been approved by the Minister for Planning.

A change to the draft Incorporated Document is, therefore, required to ensure project delivery can occur without delay.

5. **Proposed amendment of clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document**

NELP proposes to amend paragraph (vii) of clause 4.9.1(a) of the draft Incorporated Document, as follows:

(vii) Construction, protection, modification, removal or relocation of electricity transmission towers on land that forms part of an existing electricity transmission easement area, minor utility installations, rail signalling, and overhead and associated infrastructure.

(The proposed amendment is underlined.)

This will enable demolition of the existing towers and development of the replacement towers to occur as preparatory buildings and works, which would avoid delay to project delivery.

The proposed amendment is appropriately specific and would not unreasonably expand the scope of preparatory buildings and works that could be undertaken.

The relocation of the transmission towers has been the subject of extensive public consultation and no public submissions have been received that oppose the proposal to demolish the existing transmission towers and install new towers within the existing electricity easement.
Detailed artist impressions produced of the reference project included the proposed location of the replacement transmission towers. Limited feedback about the relocation was received overall. Some local residents requested that the power lines be placed underground to minimise visual impacts and improve local amenity.

Communities were advised that other options for the project around Watsonia Station and shops were still being explored which focused on opportunities for different local road, walking, cycling and bus connections.

March 2019

In March 2019, prior to the EES going on public display on 10 April, an alternate option for North East Link around Watsonia Station and shops was released for community feedback. Artist impressions of the option showed more detailed views of the proposed relocated transmission towers. A fact sheet was produced to explain why keeping the towers above ground is the only feasible option. The fact sheet included answers to expected questions about when the towers would be relocated and anticipated construction impacts. Information was also provided about the EES process and opportunities for public comment during the EES public exhibition period.

Summary of communication activities prior to EES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reach</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postcard to local residents</td>
<td>Monday 18 March 2019</td>
<td>22,000+ people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email broadcast to local residents</td>
<td>Wednesday 20 March 2019</td>
<td>1,100+ people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media posts</td>
<td>Wednesday 20 – Monday 25 March</td>
<td>9,200+ people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project website page</td>
<td>Monday 18 March 2019 (launch date)</td>
<td>2,590+ people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising in local newspapers</td>
<td>Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20 March 2019</td>
<td>75,000+ people</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summary of engagement activities prior to EES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information display at project hub</td>
<td>Monday 18 March – Tuesday 9 April 2019</td>
<td>260+ visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Meet the engineers’ drop-in information display at project hub timed to coincide with an annual community festival at Watsonia Shops</td>
<td>Saturday 23 March 2019</td>
<td>200+ visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback survey (online and hard copy)</td>
<td>Monday 18 March – Tuesday 9 April 2019</td>
<td>45+ responses</td>
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Summary of feedback related to transmission towers prior to EES
Similar to the consultation undertaken in September 2018, NELP received limited feedback about relocating the towers. The majority of feedback related to local road, walking, bike and bus connections and the number of parking spaces at Watsonia Railway Station.

The majority of community members who wanted to discuss the transmission towers understood and accepted why they could not be located below ground and were positive about the relocation creating more space for parking at Watsonia Railway Station. Positive comments were also received about moving the pedestrian crossing further away from the power lines (the alternate option replaces a pedestrian overpass which would have passed directly under the power lines with an at-grade crossing at Elder Street). A small number of people who visited the hub requested the power lines be moved underground to improve local amenity.

Two residents living on Elder Street, either directly next to or close to the proposed new location for the transmission towers, and one resident on a nearby street, visited the information display at the hub to discuss concerns about visual impacts and reductions in property values. One of the Elder Street residents requested the NELP team visit their home to discuss their concerns in more detail. This was arranged, and additional feedback was recorded.

Summary of meeting with Elder Street resident

| Summary | NELP met with resident at their home to discuss relocation of the transmission towers. |
| Stakeholder comments | Not happy with visual amenity and questioned whether alternatives have been investigated. The resident also asked if any compensation would be provided for loss of market value and impact. |
| Team response | NELP explained that the EES process presents a good opportunity to formally raise their concerns and that alternative options are not feasible and difficult from an engineering perspective. The resident was encouraged to attend the public information session on 27 April at the Watsonia hub where technical experts will be available. NELP also advised that a one-on-one meeting with the technical team could be arranged and that compensation is not generally provided where there is no acquisition of land. |

Summary of feedback received related to transmission tower relocation through the EES

A number of the submissions received on the EES commented on the impacts associated with the reference project and the alternate design option for the Watsonia Railway Station and shops precinct. Of these, no submissions were made that objected or commented negatively on the proposal to demolish the existing transmission towers and install replacement towers within the existing electricity easement.
Attachment C - copy of Fact Sheet