

Eden Estates SLR Inception Meeting EPA

Held on: 20/10/2025 – 2:30 to 3:15PM

At: Online

Chaired by: Karen Lettice

Attended

Karen Lettice, Manager, State Rezoning DPHI

Eesha Bajaj, Planning Officer, State Rezoning DPHI

Asini Rajapakse, Senior Planning Officer, State Rezoning DPHI

s74 A/Unit Head, Office of the CEO, EPA

s74 A/Senior Environmental Planning and Assessment Officer, EPA

Apologies

Sidonie Crepeau, Senior Planning Officer, State Rezoning DPHI

Declarations of interest

N/A

Agenda item discussion and actions

Agenda

- Buffer zone around SWMC (all waste types)
 - Landfill gas migration
 - Groundwater contamination (water management)
 - Odour, Noise (noting OPF not yet in operation)
- Productivity Zone within buffer
- Required buffer / land use conflict.

Discussion

- Project Status and Approach

- The project has transitioned from Planning Proposal & Scoping Proposal to State-led Rezoning.
- A hybrid planning approach is being adopted, to utilise work undertaken to date.
- EPA reiterated previous comments and expectations regarding environmental assessments.

- Environmental Studies and Data

- Sampling plans have been prepared for additional contaminated land and landfill gas assessments. These have been reviewed by an NSW accredited site auditor. Sampling has not yet commenced.
- EPA advised that odour and noise modelling should reflect worst-case scenarios and take into account all approved future developments at the landfill (such as the Organics Processing Facility) as well as understanding where new waste cells will be located. Consideration of noise, odour etc will need to take place at the closest potential sensitive receiver. The landowner should prepare these to support rezoning.
- The sampling plan for landfill gas monitoring recommends that testing occurs over a 24-month period. The site auditor agreed with this approach. *(Post meeting comment: DPHI notes that the full testing period will not be achievable prior to exhibition in June 2026 and will require an interim testing report to be submitted, with testing continuing for the full testing period and subsequently submitted. Can discuss further at next meeting.)*
- DPHI stated that they had heard that the creek line may offer potential mitigation for gas migration. EPA said waterbodies can potentially offer some mitigation but detailed investigation would be needed to understand if this is the case.

- Buffer Zones and Sensitive Land Uses

- EPA's letter to City of Newcastle Council in February 2025 recommended a 1000-metre buffer between SWMC and sensitive land uses (e.g. residential zones, schools, hospitals). This aligns with citing recommendations for large putrescible landfills in the Solid waste landfill – Environmental Guidelines (EPA, 2016).
- EPA noted that a new draft of these guidelines has just been [released](#). Section 5.8 of the proposed update includes a section on development adjacent to a landfill, which is relevant to this proposal.

- The 2 Odour Unit contour should be mapped and reflected.
- EPA noted that maps of the proposed buffer zone contained in two separate reports show the scale of the 1000m differently. The “Waste Facility Buffer over Concept Plan” map shows 1000m closer to the landfill than the ground gas sampling plan. Any maps show a buffer zone should be consistent in exhibited documents.
- Odour, Noise, and Contamination Considerations
 - New air quality (including odour) and noise studies are required prior to public exhibition. Modelling can be undertaken based on worst case scenarios and an understanding of the current and future potential operations at the landfill.
 - Truck movements and future expansions (e.g. OPF) must be considered in impact assessments.
 - Groundwater contamination risk was noted due to potential flow direction from the landfill towards the proposal site.
 - Landfill gas migration should be assessed, particularly given the presence of a large putrescible land and historical underground coal mining activity.
- SWMC Facility and Future Planning
 - The Organics Processing Facility is approved but not yet fully operational. Future expansion and any additional activities must be considered in planning. *(Post meeting comment: in addition to the OPF, EPA also understands Council has approval to relocate their existing materials processing facility closer to the southern boundary and adjacent the proposed OPF. See consent DA2022/00468. This may create additional noise sources and should be considered as part of future assessments)*
 - SWMC is classified as regionally significant. Planning should not constrain future operations. EPA are aware that a different DPHI department were soon to exhibit documents around regionally significant infrastructure (Industrial Lands Policy) which is understood to include SWMC.
- Land Use and Productivity Zone
 - Discussion held regarding potential productivity zones within buffer areas.
 - EPA advised that associated land uses may be impacted by odour and noise – persons working in a warehouse for example can be considered a sensitive receptor – so this needs to be considered when looking at future use.
 - Any use of the land would also need to consider possible impacts on future residents – for example, if warehousing were placed there, truck noise etc may cause issues for residents. These things all need to be considered.

Action Items

Action	Responsible	Status
Confirm timing for landfill gas sampling, assessment and reporting	DPHI	Pending
Align buffer mapping with EPA guidelines, review inconsistencies between reports.	DPHI	Pending
Initiate odour and noise studies based on worst-case scenarios	DPHI	Pending
Contact Jessica Farrell (DPHI) for Industrial Lands policy and data insights	DPHI	Pending
Assess feasibility of productivity land uses within buffer zones	DPHI	Pending
Post meeting comment: DPHI notes that the full testing period will not be achievable prior to exhibition in June 2026 and will require an interim testing report to be submitted, with testing continuing for the full testing period and subsequently submitted. Can discuss further at next meeting.	DPHI/EPA	Pending

Other comments

N/A

Upcoming meetings

N/A