



**Submission No. 5**  
(Villawood Facility)

SL 16/9/09

16 September 2009

Secretary  
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works  
Parliament of Australia  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

**Bankstown City Council's submission - Redevelopment of the Villawood Immigration Detention Facility**

I refer to the notification dated 14 August 2009 by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) for the proposed redevelopment of the Villawood Immigration Detention Facility (VIDF).

Please find the enclosed submission from Bankstown City Council. Council's main areas of concern are:

- Security of VIDF.
- High risk detainees in VIDF.
- Impact on neighbouring properties.
- Community consultation.
- Stormwater Flooding Catchment.
- Biodiversity Corridor Strategy.
- Heritage precinct.
- Site contamination.
- Energy and water conservation.

If you have any questions, please contact Council's Strategic Planner, Mr Kyou Won Rhee on (02) 9707 9489.

Yours faithfully,

James Carey  
Acting Group Manager - ESD

Enc - Submission by Bankstown City Council



## **SUBMISSION BY BANKSTOWN CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE VILLAWOOD IMMIGRATION DETENTION FACILITY**

1. Bankstown City Council (Council) has reviewed the Statement of Evidence submitted by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance Department) on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) for the redevelopment of Villawood Immigration Detention Facility (VIDF) on the sites known as Lot 100 and 102 DP 1041971. Council has concerns with the proposed redevelopment of VIDF as it will have an impact on the local residents and the environment.

### **CONCERNS**

#### **Security of Villawood Immigration Detention Facility (VIDF)**

2. Council is concerned with the introduction of 'innovative containment measures' proposed by the Finance Department to avoid correctional style containment. Council cannot support the new initiative until more details and information are revealed, especially how it will effectively protect the local community without the predominant use of perimeter fencing.

#### **High risk detainees in VIDF**

3. The redevelopment includes a new detention area for high risk detainees in Stage 2 and 3 of VIDF. Council understands that high risk detainees include detainees with criminal offences. Council does not support detention centres being used to house detainees with criminal records. The Finance Department and DIAC should reconsider their policy position and consider other locations to detain high risk detainees.

**Impact on neighbouring properties - Noise, traffic and light.**

4. Council is concerned with the potential increase in parking spaces within VIDF from 175 to 250 car spaces. The Finance Department should consider the potential impact on the local road system as part of the proposed development.
5. Council is concerned with the potential noise impact on the neighbouring residential properties during the construction on VIDF.
6. Council is concerned with the potential light spillage from security devices to neighbouring and adjoining properties. Please be aware that in 2002, the Government sold the surplus land known as No. 80 Miller Road to private developers to be redeveloped for residential purposes. Any redevelopment designs should consider the future potential impact on adjoining properties.

**Community consultation**

7. Council requests that the Finance Department consult with local residents and Council regarding the redevelopment plans and construction management plans. In the past, Commonwealth projects have organised public meetings, presentations, local notification campaigns and websites to facilitate transparency for the local community. Council requests similar notification procedures to take place for this redevelopment.

**Stormwater Flooding Catchment**

8. Stage 2 and 3 of the VIDF is situated within the stormwater flood catchment of Villawood. The current redevelopment is an opportunity to develop buildings that are sympathetic to the flooding conditions. Council has completed the Villawood Catchment Flood Study, which includes the VIDF site. Once the flood study is endorsed by Council, it will be made available to the Finance Department. The matter is being reported to Council on 22 September 2009. Council requests that the Finance Department consider the findings of the Villawood Flood Study.

9. Council does not support any proposal involving the replacement of existing overland flow paths with pipes and concrete channels.
10. The redevelopment of VIDF should consider and protect the existing Council-owned stormwater infrastructure within the VIDF site. Council requests that the Finance Department liaise with Council to determine the location of the stormwater infrastructure at the concept stage of the redevelopment.

### **Bankstown Biodiversity Corridor Strategy**

11. Council's Biodiversity Corridor Strategy was adopted in 2002 and it should be considered for the proposed development. The Strategy identifies the endangered Cooks River / Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation communities that are to be retained on the site. Council acknowledges the proposed retention of the Vegetation Conservation Zone beyond the south-western boundary of Stages 2 and 3, however, remnant bushland and protected trees on the remaining site should be retained to preserve the biodiversity value of the site. Council requests that the Finance Department consider the Biodiversity Corridor Strategy and the creation of on-going management plans for the protected vegetation communities.

### **Heritage Precinct**

12. The redevelopment proposes the creation of a new heritage precinct for the existing heritage items on the site. Council is aware of a Heritage Conservation Management Plan prepared in 2001. Council requests that the Finance Department consult with the Bankstown Heritage Committee regarding the proposed relocation of the items and the creation of the new precinct.

**Site Contamination**

13. Council is aware of soil contamination resulting from the former Leightonfield Munitions Factory prior to the establishment of the Villawood Migrant Hostel. Council has records of historic and current site contamination near the site and Council requests that the Finance Department liaise with Council regarding these matters. Council requests a copy of the verification by a Contaminated Site Auditor prior to construction.

**Energy and Water Conservation**

14. Council is encouraged that the submission considers the energy and water conservation targets. Council requests that the Finance Department consider introducing solar exchange hot water units with back up gas boilers for the existing and proposed hot water plants.