Australia's National
Science Agency

CSIRO Upgrade and Fitout of Building 302

Research Way, Clayton, Victoria

Statement of Evidence
to the Parliamentary Standing
Committee on Public Works

Submission 1.0

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Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) proposes the upgrade and fitout of Building 302 at the CSIRO site located at Research Way, Clayton, Victoria, to deliver purpose-built laboratory facilities for CSIRO staff relocating from the CSIRO site located at 107 - 121 Station Street, Aspendale, Victoria.

2. This investment is required to maintain nationally significant atmospheric and climate science capability and to enable CSIRO's strategic decision to divest the Aspendale site.

3. The upgrade and fitout will deliver fit-for-purpose, compliant, and future ready laboratory spaces essential for ongoing climate monitoring, greenhouse gas observations, and atmospheric research by CSIRO.

Scope

4. The works will provide 1,699m² of 4-star Green Star Interiors accredited laboratories and upgraded electrical, mechanical, fire and hydraulic building services to achieve compliance with Australian Standard 2982:2010 Laboratory Design and Construction, the National Construction Code (NCC) and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy.

5. The works will provide capacity to operate scientific equipment and instrumentation for long term research needs, as well as flexibility to accommodates changing and advancing laboratory requirements into the future.

Key Issues

6. The existing Aspendale laboratories are beyond end of life, and incapable of supporting modern atmospheric science practices. The relocation of the CSIRO staff at Aspendale has been planned for 7 years and has been postponed due to various factors.

7. CSIRO identified the Clayton site as the preferred location for consolidating the Aspendale capability. While it currently lacks the required infrastructure, other CSIRO sites either do not have capacity or are unsuitable.

8. Investment in the building infrastructure at Clayton directly supports the delivery of the CSIRO Corporate Strategy and the CSIRO Property Strategy by providing contemporary, compliant laboratory infrastructure that supports national research priorities. It strengthens CSIRO's research capability, optimises the property footprint, and ensures facilities are aligned with long-term organisational needs.

Costs

9. The cost estimate for the project is $18.27 million (excluding GST). This cost estimate includes design services, project management, construction, escalation and contingency.

10. The project's funding has been secured through the CSIRO capital works program.

Introduction

11. The project presented in this submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works is for the upgrade and fitout of Building 302 at the Clayton, Victoria site to deliver purpose-built laboratory facilities for CSIRO staff relocating from the CSIRO Aspendale, Victoria site.

12. The project will deliver fit-for-purpose, compliant, and future ready laboratory spaces essential for ongoing climate monitoring, greenhouse gas observations, and atmospheric research delivered by CSIRO. This project is required to maintain nationally significant atmospheric and climate science capability and to enable CSIRO's strategic decision to divest the Aspendale site.

13. CSIRO staff currently at the Aspendale site bring together CSIRO's core capability in climate modelling and atmospheric composition and chemistry observations. These capabilities generate and share research that underpins Australia's resilience to changing climate, atmospheric and ocean risks, and informs climate-related decision-making.

14. As Australia moves toward net-zero and adapts to climate-related changes, CSIRO continues to invest in the monitoring, reporting and verification of natural and human-generated emissions. This work spans long-term atmospheric drivers of climate as well as short-term air quality and health parameters. High-quality monitoring networks and modelling capabilities developed and maintained by these programs are critical in producing accurate emissions estimates and forecasts for Australia.

15. CSIRO's facilities at Aspendale have supported CSIRO's atmospheric science capability for many decades. Over this time, scientific priorities, research directions, operational requirements and technology have evolved quickly; increasing pressure on the capacity of the facilities and infrastructure.

Background

16. CSIRO is one of Australia's leading multidisciplinary research organisations, with more than 5,200 people working across 46 sites in Australia and internationally.

17. Since its inception in 1926, CSIRO has played a vital role in shaping Australia and generating wealth for the nation. The organisation and its scientists have established an

international reputation for excellence and achievement in basic and applied research. CSIRO's work contributes to the ongoing prosperity of Australia's primary and secondary industries and to the creation of new technologies, products, and techniques.

18. The 2-hectare CSIRO Aspendale site was established in the early 1950s as Australia's centre for atmospheric physics and meteorological research. It housed the Division of Meteorological Physics, later the Division of Atmospheric Physics and Division of Atmospheric Research, and became the home of Australian climate science. Over more than seven decades, Aspendale scientists made foundational contributions to weather prediction, climate variability, greenhouse gas research, and Earth system modelling.

19. The facilities at Aspendale are significantly aged and no longer meet contemporary building standards or regulatory expectations. Key services are now at or beyond end of life and do not comply with current codes or industry best practice.

20. Released in August 2019, the CSIRO Property Strategy's 2019–2029 plan determined that CSIRO needs to consolidate its property footprint to be sustainable into the future. By lowering overall resource consumption and directing investment toward fewer sites it can deliver greater value for research.

21. The CSIRO Property Strategy's 2019–29 plan formally designated the Aspendale site for divestment. This decision initiated a review of options for relocation from Aspendale site through consultation with staff and external stakeholders. CSIRO identified the Clayton site as the preferred location to consolidate and accommodate the Aspendale capability.

22. The 15-hectare Clayton site is located 20km North of the Aspendale site, and is currently home to 895 staff and 320 affiliates working in materials, minerals, chemicals, manufacturing, and digital research. It is CSIRO's longest-standing location in Victoria, playing a key role in CSIRO's and Australia's research goals since the 1950s.

23. The project to relocate to Clayton first commenced in 2019, but was paused in the early phases due to an organisational restructure that saw the Aspendale based research unit Oceans and Atmosphere merge with Land and Water to become 'Environment'.

24. Early assessment of the Clayton site identified no single space available to accommodate all Aspendale based staff and instead, recommended refurbishment of multiple spaces

across the site for both relocating existing functions plus those works to accommodate them.

25. Further progress was slowed due to a whole of site review of the Clayton site that included planning for an optimum space for the Aspendale relocation. Recent portfolio changes have confirmed the relocation of the Aspendale staff to the Clayton site.

26. Further details on options considered are outlined in this submission. A location plan of the Aspendale and Clayton sites is provided at Attachment A to this submission.

Purpose of the works

Project objective

27. The objective of this project is to relocate and consolidate Aspendale staff into modern, efficient and fit-for-purpose laboratories that meet their scientific and operational requirements at the CSIRO's site in Clayton, Victoria.

Main benefits

28. The main benefits expected to be realised by CSIRO through delivery of this project include:

    a. enhancing research and science through the provision of modern, fit-for-purpose laboratory facilities;
    b. strengthening national scientific capability by ensuring continuity of critical long-term climate and atmospheric data streams that underpin national climate resilience, international research partnerships, and major scientific programs;
    c. improved collaboration and site vibrancy by co-locating Aspendale staff with those from other research units already based at Clayton, reducing duplicated functions and supporting more efficient workflows;
    d. attracting, retaining and developing talent through the provision of world class, national research infrastructure and workplace environments; and
    e. reducing operating costs by consolidating ongoing repairs, maintenance and utilities costs associated to central site operations.

Project outcomes

29. The project will deliver the following outcomes:

    a. reduce operating and maintenance costs by retiring ageing infrastructure at Aspendale and consolidating staff into efficient, purpose-built facilities;
    b. deliver a cost-effective property solution aligned with CSIRO and Commonwealth policies, supporting long term sustainability and value for money;
    c. improve staff health, safety and wellbeing through the provision of modern, compliant and safe laboratory and office environments;

d. increase collaboration and integration across various science programs by bringing teams together at a single site;
e. enhance utilisation of existing CSIRO infrastructure to support specialised scientific workflows and long-term research needs;
f. provide flexible and adaptable workspaces that can evolve with future research directions and organisational needs; and
g. maintain research operations with minimal disruption to research staff and activities.

Need for the works

Strategic Alignment

30. CSIRO continues to develop technologies that increase the scale and efficiency of Australia's oceanographic, atmospheric and climate monitoring to prepare for and minimise impacts of environmental change. The project will ensure CSIRO can continue to deliver modelling and emissions verification functions to support Australian and global efforts to more effectively manage climate change.

31. Research undertaken at the Clayton laboratories will support and enhance deep collaborations with:

    a. Commonwealth departments and agencies, including:

        i. Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO);
        ii. Australian Climate Service (ACS);
        iii. Bureau of Meteorology (BoM);
        iv. Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW);
        v. Department of Defence;
        vi. Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR); and
        vii. Geoscience Australia;

    b. Australian Government–funded national research infrastructure programs, including:

        i. Australian Antarctic Science Program;
        ii. Marine National Facility;
        iii. National Computational Infrastructure (NCI);
        iv. National Environmental Science Program (NESP); and

    c. Other national and international research partners and organisations.

Alignment with CSIRO Corporate Strategy

32. Delivery of contemporary laboratory environments is essential to sustaining CSIRO's research excellence, reducing operational risk, and enabling teams to maintain national leadership in priority scientific domains. The project safeguards CSIRO's role as the

trusted national authority on atmospheric composition, greenhouse gas observations, and climate system monitoring.

33. The functions of CSIRO are detailed in the Science and Industry Research Act 1949 (SIR Act) and, alongside the Ministerial Statement of Expectations (October 2025), guide CSIRO's four objectives as outlined in the CSIRO Corporate Plan 2025-26. This project will support the delivery of the CSIRO Corporate Plan by enabling these strategic objectives:

    a. Drive science and technology for impact - The project enables impact-driven science and research that addresses Australia's challenges in research areas.
    b. Steward research infrastructure - The project provides access to fit-for-purpose research infrastructure containing state-of-the-art facilities and equipment.
    c. Connect science and innovation to society – The project enhances the productivity and long-term competitiveness of Australia's innovation system.
    d. Create an enduring and empowering CSIRO - The project creates a sustainable and adaptable organisation with a vibrant, diverse and safe culture that attracts and retains exceptional people.

Alignment with the CSIRO Property Strategy

34. In August 2019, CSIRO's Board endorsed CSIRO's Property Strategy 2019-2029 plan that set out five strategic property priorities. This project will support the delivery of the CSIRO Property Strategy by enabling these property priorities:

    a. Align infrastructure with science - Align CSIRO's infrastructure and facilities with the current and future needs of the organisation.
    b. Leverage strategic infrastructure opportunities - Capitalise on planned strategic infrastructure investment by other parties, including within the Commonwealth, state/territory and higher education sectors.
    c. Consolidate our property footprint - Consolidate to sites and locations that align to CSIRO's future needs, improve the utilisation of properties, and optimise investment of limited funds in key sites.
    d. Invest in maintaining key infrastructure - Identify key infrastructure and maintain/upgrade these existing facilities to be fit-for-purpose.

e. Environmental Sustainability - Invest where appropriate in minimising the environmental footprint of facilities and operations while supporting CSIRO's own agenda to support leading environmental practice.

Current deficiencies

35. The existing facilities at Aspendale are significantly aged and no longer meet contemporary building standards or regulatory expectations. Due to the long-term plan to divest the site, only essential maintenance investment has been undertaken over the past decade to maintain operations and safety. This has resulted in the progressive deterioration of both the building fabric and critical infrastructure systems. Key services are now at or beyond end-of-life and do not comply with current codes or industry best practice.

36. Furthermore, the laboratories themselves were never designed to support modern scientific practices. The layouts are inflexible, lack efficient segregation of clean and hazardous processes, and do not accommodate current requirements for controlled environments, or advanced instrumentation. Services are insufficiently provisioned for contemporary laboratory loads, and the spatial configuration does not support collaborative or cross-disciplinary workflows expected in modern research environments.

37. As a result, the existing facilities present operational inefficiencies, elevated compliance risk, and increasing cost pressure due to ageing systems and reactive maintenance. The current infrastructure cannot reliably support the scientific capability required by the business, establishing the need for investment in purpose-built, compliant laboratory spaces aligned with CSIRO's future research needs.

Options considered

38. CSIRO has been assessing options for the relocation of staff at Aspendale since the CSIRO Board endorsed the Property Strategy 2019-2029 plan. The assessment has considered scientific, operational, infrastructure and strategic requirements, as well as the suitability of existing facilities and equipment.

Location

39. The project considered various location options, including other CSIRO sites and off site options, however the assessment concluded that, in alignment with the CSIRO Property Strategy, relocating the majority of Victorian laboratory, analytical and support functions to the Clayton site represents the most efficient and strategically aligned long-term solution, providing consolidation of the core scientific capabilities and strengthening collaboration with other CSIRO research units.

Commercial

40. The project considered options to utilise leased premises, including those of industry partners. Through assessment, the leased premises option has the following disadvantages:

    a. an additional premise will create an additional maintenance and operating impost for CSIRO to manage and fund;
    b. lost spatial economies from dispersed services, including goods stores, chemical storage, and shared meeting spaces; and
    c. loss of control of space to ensure facilities remain adaptable and flexible for future requirements.

41. A leased premise is deemed unsuitable, and/or unaffordable under CSIRO's forward operating expenditure profile.

Scale

42. CSIRO compared the benefit of physical co-location versus maintaining discrete operations and developed a range of scale options considering the potential benefits, feasibility of co-locating and regenerating facilities. These options include:

a. Option 0 - Retain operations at Aspendale (status quo);
b. Option 1 - Dispersed Laboratory Facilities;
c. Option 2 - Consolidated Laboratory Facility; and
d. Option 3 - New Greenfield Facility.

Comparison of options

Option 0 – Retain Operations at Aspendale

43. Option 0 is a "status quo" option that helps compare the consequences and risks that are likely to impact CSIRO and the Commonwealth by maintaining the current course of action. Option 0 provides minimal increased benefits to CSIRO and does not align to the objectives described above.

44. Option 0 assumes retaining all laboratory and support functions at the existing Aspendale site, maintaining and operating the facilities in their current configuration, as per the assets' current lifecycle plans.

45. Under Option 0, staff would continue operating from the current facilities, relying on infrastructure that is at end-of-life and increasingly unable to support the operational, compliance and research needs of programs. Eventually, this may result in infrastructure and/or operations being ceased when the risk of infrastructure failures exceeded CSIRO resources or risk tolerance.

Benefits

46. Option 0 is unlikely to realise any Main Benefits.

Solution Risks

47. Option 0 has the following solution risks:

a. Aged, end-of-life infrastructure:

i. increases the likelihood of system failures and assets failing that will disrupt research;
ii. increases cost risks in maintenance and reactive management, with nil expected improvement to long-term functionality; and
iii. is likely to degrade quality and efficiency of science as legacy assets are made to work through compromise and 'making do'.

b. Non-compliance with building and modern laboratory standards increases regulatory, operational and safety risks.
c. The facilities' inability to support evolving technology and future research requirements risks long-term degradation of scientific capability.
d. The reputation of the CSIRO will degrade as the service and facility expectations of staff, affiliates, industry partners and visitors are not met.

Option 1 - Dispersed Laboratory Facilities

48. Under the Dispersed Laboratory Facilities option (Option 1), the project will deliver facilities for staff across multiple locations within the existing CSIRO estate. This option focused on utilising existing, owned, underutilised facilities across the CSIRO estate.

49. Various buildings at CSIRO's Clayton site were identified as possible options.

Benefits

50. Option 1 is possible to realise Main Benefits, with manageable risks.

51. Option 1 would provide the following additional benefits:

a. Underutilised assets will be somewhat improved through conversion from low-grade facilities into compliant, well-performing science facilities connected to other like-facilities, that somewhat extend their usable life.
b. Improved regulatory, operational and safety compliance.
c. Increased utilisation of CSIRO's existing estate.

Solution Risks

52. Option 1 has the following solution risks:

a. Existing structural and services layouts would likely restrict optimal laboratory adjacencies or require additional investment to modify base building systems.
b. Fragmentation of science workflows and increased operational complexity through multiple operating environments.
c. Dilution of the Aspendale teams' identity, professional relationships and partnerships.
d. Lost collaboration and engagement between relocated staff.

Implementation Risks

53. Option 1 has the following implementation risks:

    a. Works across multiple buildings and services increases project complexity.
    b. Works across multiple buildings increases risk of disruptive relocation and staging of other research units to allow for works to be undertaken.
    c. Some expected impacts on adjoining CSIRO operations due to construction noise, temporary service interruptions and access constraints during construction.
    d. Inherent latent condition and non-compliance risks within existing buildings that may require significant rectification.

Option 2 - Consolidated Laboratory Facility

54. Under the Consolidated Laboratory Facility option (Option 2), the project will deliver facilities for Aspendale staff at one congruous facility within the existing CSIRO estate. This option focused on utilising one existing, owned, underutilised facility.

55. Building 302 at CSIRO's Clayton site was identified as the only viable owned space within the nearby CSIRO estate that can allow for this option, being large enough and with capacity to house the operations.

Benefits

56. Option 2 is likely to realise the Main Benefits, with acceptable risks.

57. Option 2 would provide the following additional benefits:

    a. One congruous facility will improve the efficiency of the scientific operations and encourage cross-functional collaboration.
    b. Underutilised assets will be greatly improved through conversion from low-grade facilities into compliant, efficient, high-performing science facilities connected to other like-facilities, that greatly extends its usable life.
    c. The facilities will become scalable and flexible to accommodates the everchanging and developing nature of technology, innovation and science research.
    d. Enhance the already well-established collaborative culture among Aspendale staff by keeping teams co-located.
    e. Improved regulatory, operational and safety compliance.

f. Increased utilisation of CSIRO's existing estate.

Solution Risks

58. Option 2 has the following solution risks:

a. Existing structural and services layouts may restrict optimal laboratory adjacencies or require additional investment to modify base-building systems.
b. Inherent latent condition and non-compliance risks within existing building that may require some rectification.

Implementation Risks

59. Option 2 has the following implementation risks:

a. Minor expected impacts on adjoining CSIRO operations due to construction noise, temporary service interruptions and access constraints during construction.

Option 3 - New Greenfield Facilities

60. The New Greenfield Facilities option (Option 3) co-locates all Aspendale staff into new, greenfield, fit-for-purpose facilities at the Clayton site.

Benefits

61. Option 3 is likely to realise Main Benefits, with acceptable risks.

62. Delivery of Option 3 would provide the following additional benefits:

a. One congruous facility will improve the efficiency of the scientific operations and encourage cross-functional collaboration.
b. The facilities will become scalable and flexible to accommodates the everchanging and developing nature of technology, innovation and science research.
c. Enhance the already well-established collaborative culture among Aspendale staff by keeping teams co-located.
d. Improved regulatory, operational and safety compliance.
e. Provide a distinctive research identity, providing a flagship facility that showcases national climate, atmospheric and ocean science capability.

Option Evaluation

Cost Benefit Analysis

63. CSIRO undertook a cost benefit analysis to compare options against the status quo and determine whether the expected costs provide net benefit to CSIRO and the Commonwealth.

64. The analysis identified the Dispersed Laboratory Facilities option (Option 1) as having negligible benefit to the organisation, with unacceptable risks.

65. The analysis identified the Consolidated Laboratory Facility option (Option 2) and New Greenfield Facilities option (Option 3) as having beneficial impact to the CSIRO, due to the extent they meet the project objective, have good likelihood of benefits being realised, and sound mitigations available to manage risks.

Value For Money Assessment

66. CSIRO undertook a cost estimate and value for money assessment of the options that meet the project objectives and have high likelihood of benefits being realised. The assessment identified the Consolidated Laboratory Facility option (Option 2) provides greatest value for money to the Commonwealth, as it provides significant benefit to staff, CSIRO and the Commonwealth without high whole-of-life costs of a new building.

Preferred option

67. Consolidated Laboratory Facility option (Option 2) is the preferred option.

68. The preferred option provides the most strategically aligned, beneficial, technically viable, and value for money pathway to transition the Aspendale capability. It enables CSIRO to consolidate critical laboratory functions into a congruous, fit-for-purpose facility at the Clayton site. It represents the most cost effective and lowest risk model for ensuring continuity of capability while supporting the relocation of Aspendale staff.

Scope of works

69. The scope of works for the project under the preferred option is to upgrade and fitout Building 302 to provide fit for-purpose facilities at the Clayton site and continue with the planned divestment of the Aspendale site.

70. The works will encompass:

    a. Building 302 fitout works to create 1,699m2 of 4-star Green Star Interiors accredited, bespoke, fit-for-purpose, and high specification laboratories and technical spaces;
    b. Building 302 base building upgrade and improvement works to improve and increase capacity of the building's electrical, mechanical, hydraulic and ICT infrastructure; and
    c. Building 302 electronic access control and security enhancements.

71. The works will achieve compliance with Australian Standard 2982:2010 Laboratory Design and Construction and the National Construction Code (NCC).

72. The works will provide capacity to operate scientific equipment and instrumentation for long term research needs, as well as flexibility to accommodate changing and advancing laboratory requirements into the future.

73. The works is engineered to accommodate for the everchanging and developing nature of science research in the coming decades, ensuring that investment into the building is adaptable to changes in CSIRO's research capabilities. This is achieved through a well informed and consultative process with the key stakeholders.

Site selection

74. The CSIRO Clayton site is located 20 km North of the CSIRO Aspendale site. A location plan is provided at Attachment A to this submission.

75. Building 302 is sited on the East end of the Clayton site, collocating staff relocating from Aspendale with like-minded colleagues and support services.

76. Siting of the project in Clayton provides an efficient and cost-effective operational model that eliminates the duplication of services that would be required if staff were to be sited elsewhere. This model includes shared use of office accommodation, meeting rooms,

collaboration spaces, auditorium, field storage, quarantine services, onsite HSE support, reception and facilities management.

77. Increased workflow efficiencies can be achieved as the CSIRO Engineering team is also based at Clayton site, a team that supports staff at Clayton by engineering and manufacturing bespoke research equipment.

78. The Clayton site gives staff access to facilities that provide a holistic work environment that promotes diversity and inclusion. Facilities include childcare, canteen, gym, end-of-trip facilities, staff fitness programs, and parking.

79. A site plan is provided at Attachment B to this submission.

Decanting

80. The closure of the CSIRO Aspendale site will require the relocation of approximately 86 staff.

81. From 1 July 2026, approximately 25 staff are planned to transition to Clayton's existing activity-based workplace space. These staff are office-based researchers who will co-locate with the members of the same research unit already in Clayton.

82. At the completion of the works, a further 61 staff will transition to Clayton.

Zoning and approvals

83. Due to the fitout nature of the work, the project is not subject to municipal development approvals.

Details of applicable codes and standards

84. The project will comply with all relevant statutory requirements including the National Construction Code and relevant Australian Standards.

85. Laboratories delivered as part of the project will conform to numerous Australian Standards including, but not limited to:

    a. AS/NZS 1940 The storage and handling of flammable and combustible liquids.
    b. AS/NZS 2243 Safety in laboratories.
    c. AS/NZS 2982 Laboratory design and construction.

d. AS/NZS 3833 The storage and handling of mixed classes of dangerous goods, in packages and intermediate bulk containers.
e. AS 4332 The storage and handling of gases in cylinders.
f. AS/NZS 4745 Code of practice for handling combustible dusts.
g. AS/NZS 4761 Competencies for working with electrical equipment for hazardous areas.
h. AS/NZS 60079 Explosive atmospheres.

86. In addition, CSIRO has several standards and guidelines that must be met. These include:

a. CSIRO Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Principles; and
b. CSIRO Structured Cabling Specification

87. A Building Certifier has been appointed to provide ongoing advice and reviews as the design progresses confirming the design documents meet the National Construction Code 2022 and relevant Australian standards prior to occupation.

Details of land acquisition

88. This project does not involve the acquisition of land by the Commonwealth.

89. The Aspendale site is planned to be divested as part of the CSIRO Property Strategy. CSIRO anticipates this process will commence in late 2027.

Planning and design concepts

90. The design for the proposed facilities incorporates the following considerations. It will:

    a. be in accordance with CSIRO accommodation guidelines;
    b. provide a contemporary, versatile and flexible operating environment;
    c. provide a safe and secure environment for staff and operational requirements;
    d. provide a people-centred work environment in terms of space standards, access to natural light, amenities, and ventilation; and
    e. provide an environment conducive to staff collaboration, interaction and collegiality.

91. General Design Drawings are provided at Attachment C to this submission.

Site Planning

92. The proposed upgrade and fitout of Building 302 into laboratory and technical spaces will primarily support the relocation of scientific functions from the Aspendale site. In addition to meeting its core purpose, the facility has been designed with multi-purpose and consolidation capabilities to maximise investment value and reduce long-term operational overheads.

Multi-purpose capability

93. The new laboratory spaces incorporate flexible layouts, modular benches, and adaptable support rooms that can accommodate a range of scientific activities. This multi-use design minimises the need for future reconfiguration works and enhances potential utilisation.

94. These capabilities have been incorporated early in the design to avoid later retrofit costs, resulting in a more efficient one-time capital investment and reducing lifecycle expenditure.

Design for consolidation

95. The facility is intentionally designed to consolidate research functions currently dispersed across ageing infrastructure at the Aspendale site. This includes laboratory workflows, calibration spaces, storage and preparation areas. The co-location of these capabilities

will enable improved collaboration, reduced operational duplication, and more efficient asset management.

96. Consolidation reduces the need for multiple standalone upgrades and enables more efficient, centralised investment in infrastructure.

Provisions for people with disabilities

97. The works will be designed to comply with the latest edition of AS 1428.1 Design for access and mobility and the National Construction Code, where applicable.

Sustainable Design

98. The project will achieve 4-star Green Star Interior accreditation aligning with CSIRO's sustainability strategy goals and to ensure compliance with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy (ESPP).

99. A qualified Green Star Accredited Professional Consultant has been engaged to assess the design and identify a Green Star pathway to achieve the 4-Star Green Star Interiors rating.

100. The pathway includes the following principles to be incorporated into the design and construction:

    a. Sustainability focused management
    b. Indoor Environment Quality
    c. Energy
    d. Water
    e. Materials
    f. Land Use & Ecology
    g. Emissions
    h. Innovation to Building

Materials and Finishes

101. Materials and finishes have been selected for quality, durability, functionality, sustainability, availability of local support, supply and replacement.

102. The material and finishes selected significantly contribute to the Green Star pathway and targeted accreditation.

Relocation of existing equipment

103. Existing science equipment from the Aspendale site that is in good condition will be relocated to the new facility. Moving these assets into a modern, compliant laboratory environment ensures continuity of research capability and preserves the value of existing Commonwealth investments.

104. Designing the new laboratory spaces to use existing CSIRO equipment is financially beneficial by reducing the need for purchasing new equipment or making changes after construction.

Electrical and Communications Services

105. The project has undertaken a review of the existing electrical supply capacity for Building 302 and confirmed the supply demand of the upgraded building services can be met within the existing supply capacity.

106. The assessment of the existing electrical supply infrastructure confirmed that the existing switchboards in Building 302 are outdated and need to be replaced to current technology and standards. The design scope allows for replacement of such.

107. The existing server room is required to be relocated to allow for creation of efficient laboratory spaces. As such, the existing communications infrastructure will be replaced with new to support a relocated server room with new IT infrastructure. The new IT equipment will be per the CSIRO cabling requirements.

Mechanical Services

108. Existing mechanical infrastructure will be replaced with a centralised mechanical system that meets performance and sustainability objectives, and extends the life of the building.

Fire Protection

109. The existing fire protection systems in Building 302 will be upgraded to meet current compliance requirements, as well as expanded and extended as required to suit the fitout.

110. The site is currently protected by a fire hydrant network which will be upgraded to meet current compliance requirements, with fire hydrants within Building 302 being adapted to suit the fitout.

Hydraulic Services

111. The existing centralised cold-water system will be extended to suit the fitout.

112. The existing centralised hot water system will be replaced with a modern electric hot water plant, incorporating energy-efficient technology suitable for the building's revised demand profile.

113. The sewer and trade waste infrastructure will be retained, with any new drains connected into existing discharge points.

114. Stormwater infrastructure will be retained, however will be re-routed to avoid clashes with new structural elements where required.

Security

115. The site's existing electronic access control system will be extended and expanded to suit the fitout.

Environment and Heritage

116. The impact area is located within a totally disturbed, constructed and landscaped built precinct. There are no identified or expected indigenous heritage or early European heritage values within the action area. There are no identified habitat of importance, and the project will not have an impact upon any fauna, flora or ecological communities. Works will be carried out in accordance with the Heritage Strategy for CSIRO Land and Buildings (2016 - 2026) and statutory environmental obligations.

Other issues

Public Transport

117. The CSIOR Clayton site is serviced by the one bus route along Research Way, arriving at least every ten minutes during peak times, providing direct connection to Chadstone Shopping Centre and to Melbourne City via trains, connecting at Oakleigh train station.

118. There are also numerous bus routes that service neighbouring Monash University.

119. The Suburban Rail Loop East is in construction and will provide future train connection, with the Monash train station to be 300m from Building 302. Construction commenced in 2022 with a scheduled opening in 2035.

120. A site plan is provided at Attachment B to this submission.

Staff Impact

121. The closure of the CSIRO Aspendale site will require the relocation of approximately 86 staff.

122. CSIRO has consulted internally alongside Aspendale and Clayton staff and will relocate the staff in two phases.

123. From 1 July 2026, approximately 25 staff are planned to transition to Clayton's existing activity-based workplace environments. These staff are office-based researchers who will co-locate with the members of the same research group already in Clayton.

124. At the completion of the works, a further 61 Aspendale staff will transition to Clayton.

Childcare Provisions

125. A childcare facility currently operates at the western end of the site and is accessible to staff relocating to the site.

Internal Stakeholder Consultation

126. An ongoing information and consultation process with CSIRO staff has continued from project inception, through questionnaires, town halls, workshops, and meetings.

127. The project team have sought confirmation on user requirements and feedback on the design from users through each design phase and incorporated the feedback into design documentation. Information obtained from users has informed the development of options and has ultimately led to the proposed solution.

128. An ongoing information and consultation process with CSIRO staff has continued since the endorsement of the CSIRO Property Strategy 2019-2029. Although it has been over many years and impacted by organisational delays, CSIRO staff have been consulted and engaged via questionnaires, town halls, workshops, and meetings as part of each design phase milestone, with their feedback documented as part of each design milestone deliverable.

129. A Transition Team was established to support the relocation of staff by providing guidance, input, and feedback on change and communication strategies. The Transition Team comprises the Change Manager and Project Champions (comprised of staff from Aspendale and Clayton) and is represented on the Project Control Group to ensure staff feedback is considered and actioned where appropriate.

130. Project Champions act as leaders and representatives for their respective research groups, facilitating the transition by addressing staff concerns, fostering engagement, and encouraging a positive work environment. They play a key role in supporting communication between the project team and end users and in promoting a constructive approach to change.

131. The Transition Team provides structured change-management support to ensure the relocation from Aspendale to Clayton is coordinated, transparent, and attentive to staff needs. This includes advising on protocols and procedures for the new working environment, and contributing to the development of move logistics, supporting technology and storage planning.

132. The Transition Team also enables two-way communication between the relocation project and impacted staff, ensuring that issues are surfaced early, concerns are addressed, and feedback informs decision-making throughout the transition.

External Stakeholder Consultation

133. Letters outlining the project impact, expected project outcomes, benefits and timeframes were sent to the following external stakeholders in March 2026:

    a. Federal Government representatives, including:

        i. Hon. Clare O'Neil MP, Member for Hotham (Clayton is in this electorate)
        ii. Hon. Mark Dreyfus KC, Member for Isaacs (Aspendale is in this electorate)

    b. Local Government representatives, including:

        i. Monash City Council, Josh Fergeus – University Ward Councillor;
        ii. Kingston City Council, Sarah O'Donnell - Deputy Mayor, Yammerbook Ward

    c. Industry Partners;
    d. Research Collaborators; and
    e. Residents and businesses local to Aspendale and Clayton sites.

134. The project team have engaged with the CSIRO Staff Association (a section of the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU)), to provide project updates and receive their feedback.

Afterhours Noise and Vibration

135. Construction activities will be managed in line with the Construction Management Plan and all statutory requirements.

136. Some afterhours work may be required to meet project deadlines. However, efforts will be made to minimise noise and vibration impacts during these periods. All afterhours activities will be carefully planned and managed, with all required permits in place, to reduce disruptions to the surrounding community.

Heavy Vehicles and Contractor Parking

137. Site sheds, material storage, and contractor parking will remain within CSIRO property and heavy vehicles will not queue on public roads. Construction traffic will enter and exit via Normanby Road.

Cost effectiveness and public value

Outline of Total Project Costs

138. The cost estimate for the project is $18.27 million (excluding GST). This cost estimate includes design services, project management, construction, escalation and contingency.

139. The cost estimate is based on the preferred option, Option 2 - Consolidated Laboratory Facility, and has been prepared by a qualified quantity surveyor.

Funding

140. The project's funding has been secured through the CSIRO capital works program.

141. The budget allocation is sufficient to cover the anticipated cost of the project.

Delivery Methodology

142. To deliver the construction works, CSIRO will procure a contractor via a competitive request for tender process as per Commonwealth Procurement Rules and CSIRO's procurement policies.

143. CSIRO has engaged a qualified head design consultant to design, document and ensure the project is delivered to CSIRO's quality, and budget expectations. The head design consultant is responsible to engage a qualified team of subject matter expert consultants, including structural and services engineers, environmentally sustainable design, dangerous goods, and accessibility.

144. CSIRO has engaged a qualified quantity surveyor, for ongoing services throughout the whole project feasibility, design and delivery phases.

145. CSIRO has engaged a client-side project manager, to act as project manager and contract administrator, to ensure project objectives are achieved, main benefits are realised, and the cost, quality and time risks are mitigated.

Delivery Program

146. The key milestones for the project are:

TASK NAME	ANTICIPATED DATES
Schematic Design	June-25 to Sep-25
Detailed Design	Oct-25 to Jan-26
Public Works Committee Referral process	Feb-26 to June-26
Subject to Parliamentary approval construction phase will commence	July-26 to Aug-27

Public Value

147. The proposed works deliver substantial and enduring public value through the preservation and enhancement of nationally significant climate, ocean and atmospheric research capability. The staff currently based at Aspendale represent the core of Australia's expertise in climate modelling, atmospheric composition, and climate system science. Their work underpins national resilience to climate, environmental and ocean related risks, supporting informed decision making across government, industry and the broader community.

148. This capability provides essential public value through:

a. World leading climate modelling and projections that inform national and international assessments, including the data foundations for climate adaptation and mitigation planning;
b. Seasonal to millennial scale climate forecasts that support effective strategies for managing climate variability and long-term change;
c. Advances in climate dynamics research that improve the accuracy, relevance and usability of climate information for end users;
d. Delivery of targeted climate products and services to sectors such as energy, water, health, infrastructure, transport, tourism, finance, insurance and agriculture—areas where climate risk directly affects economic stability and community wellbeing;
e. Contribution to national observing systems, including the Cape Grim atmospheric observatory, which provides critical long-term atmospheric data for Australia and the global scientific community; and,
f. Development of methodologies for greenhouse gas monitoring, supporting transparency in national inventories and corporate emissions reporting.

149. Aspendale scientists play a central role in major national research partnerships, including the NESP Climate Systems Hub, the Australian Antarctic Program Partnership, the Integrated Marine Observing System, ACCESS-NRI, the Australian Climate Service, Bluelink Defence Partnership and Pacific climate adaptation initiatives. Their expertise is internationally recognised through collaborations such as the Momentum Agreement with the UK Met Office and engagement with the World Climate Research Programme and WMO Global Atmospheric Watch.

150. Relocating this capability to modern, purpose-built facilities ensures its continuity, enhances collaboration opportunities, and strengthens Australia's position as a global leader in climate science. The public value of this work is significant, as climate and environmental variability influence almost every aspect of Australia's economy and community, and the research undertaken by these teams directly supports national preparedness, economic resilience, and long-term sustainability.

151. In addition to the scientific and societal benefits, the construction program associated with the proposed works will generate short-term public value through local employment and economic activity. The project will create jobs across construction, engineering, trades and professional services, supporting local businesses and contributing to regional economic vitality. The Green Star requirements for local suppliers and services will provide flow-on benefits to the surrounding community.

152. This project will deliver a measurable reduction in CSIRO's operational expenditure and a reduction in the organisation's overall property footprint and associated maintenance, utilities, and lifecycle costs.

153. The upgrade and fitout of Building 302 will provide contemporary, energy-efficient building services and operate on an all-electric platform. These design features significantly lower energy consumption compared with legacy infrastructure, contributing to long-term operational savings and improved environmental performance. Over the whole-of-life of the asset, these efficiencies will support reduced running costs, lower emissions, and alignment with CSIRO's sustainability objectives.

154. Collectively, the consolidation of sites, reduction in property holdings, and transition to modern, efficient infrastructure generate clear public value through cost savings, improved environmental outcomes, and more effective use of Commonwealth resources.

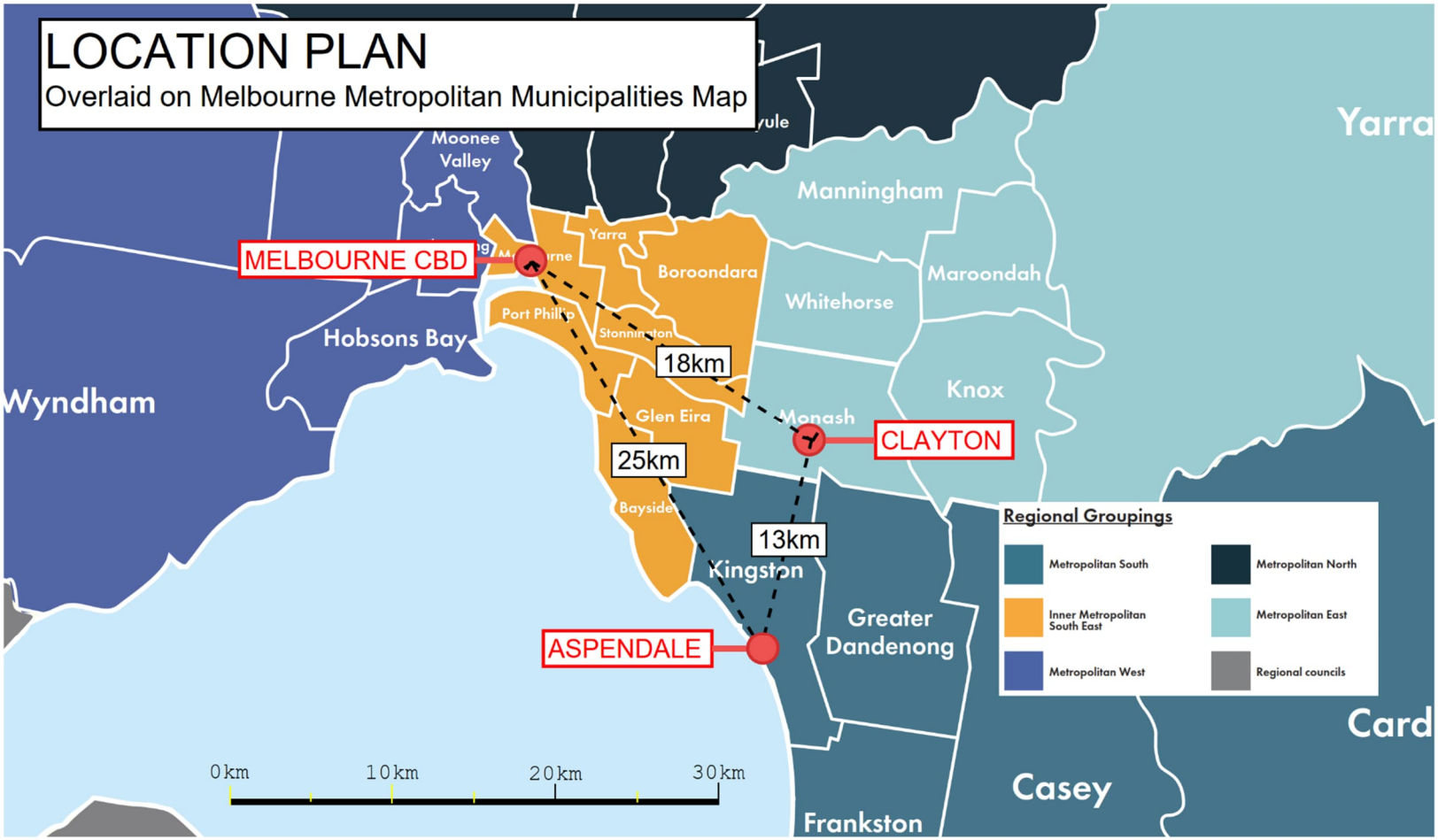
Value for Money

155. In assessing the options available, the Project team, including the Quantity Surveyor, undertook a whole-of-life cost assessment and determined that the proposed project provides a good value for money property solution.

Revenue

156. There is no expected revenue from the project.

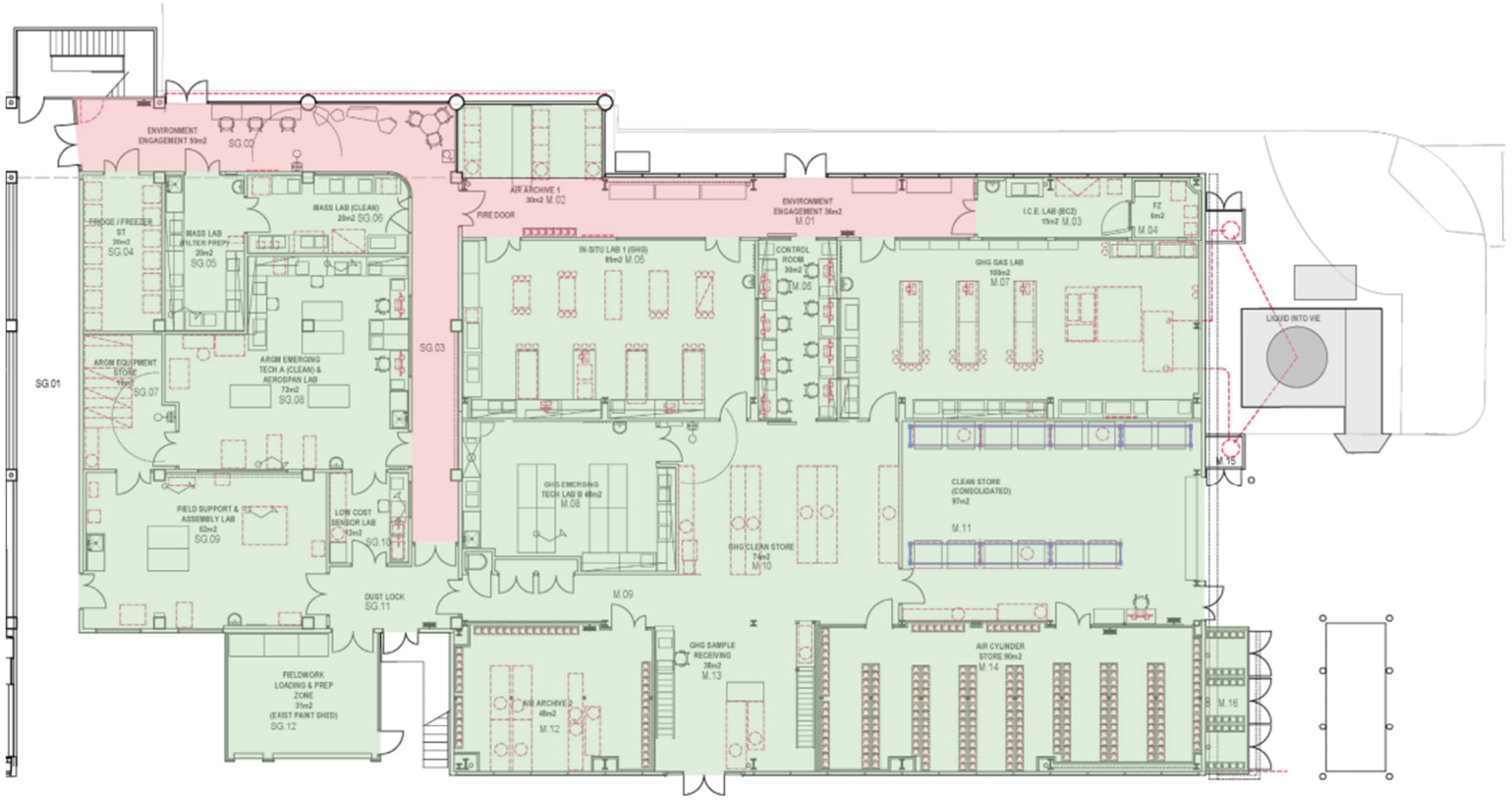
Attachment A – Location Plan

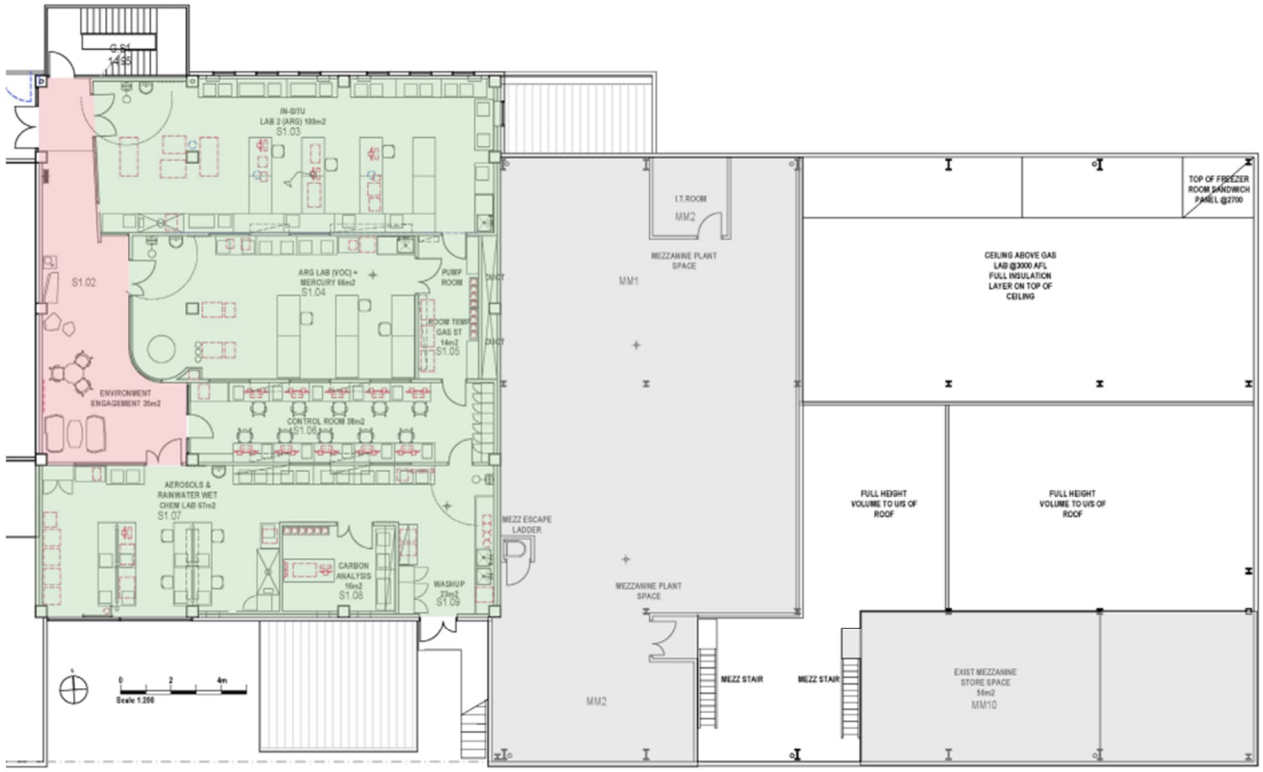


Attachment B – Clayton Site Plan

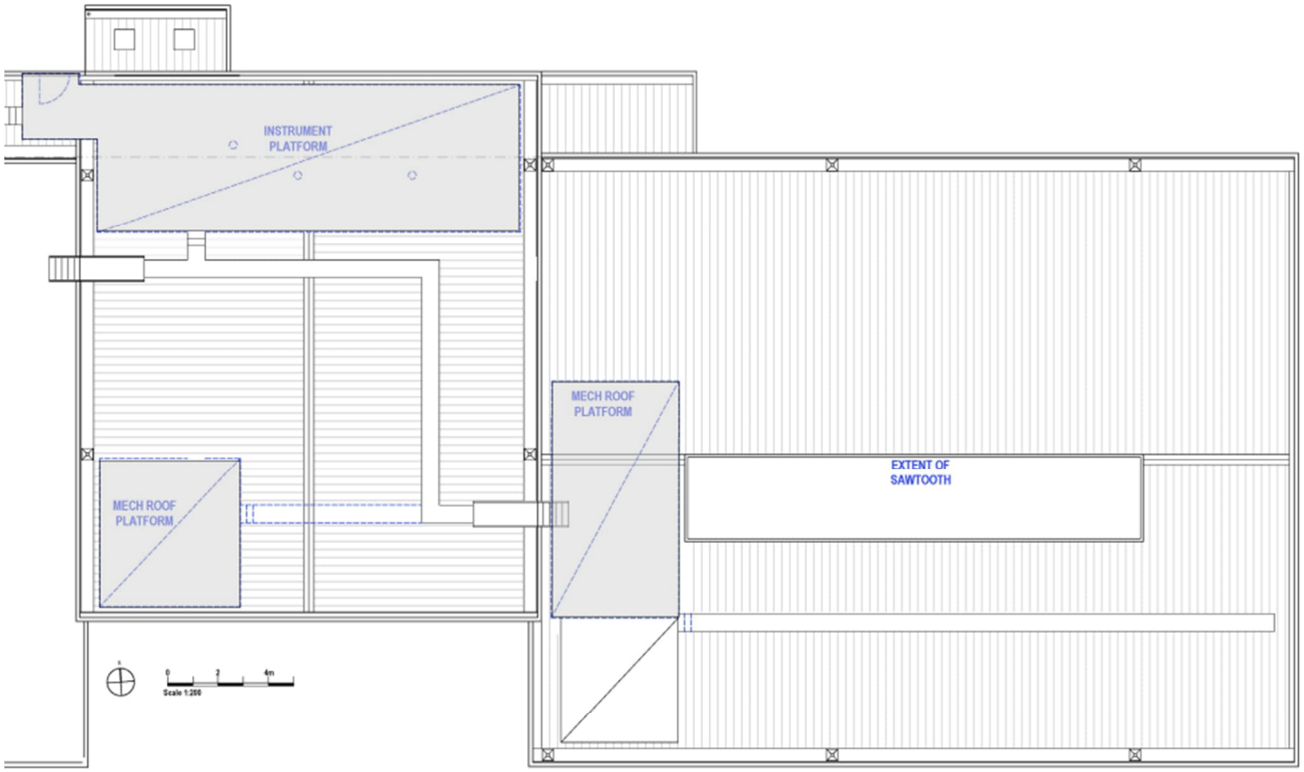
Clayton Site Locality Map

Attachment C – Design Drawings





BUILDING 302 -
LEVEL 1



BUILDING 302 - ROOF LEVEL