



Australian Government

Department of Home Affairs

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Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre Hawk Compound Redevelopment Project

Statement of Evidence

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Executive Summary

1. The purpose of the project is to redevelop the Hawk Compound within Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre (YHIDC), to meet the capability needs of Australia's Immigration Detention Network (IDN), address safety and security risks associated with the existing facilities and meet modern National Construction Code building compliance.
2. The need for the project has been generated through both an increase in the proportion of high to extreme risk detainees within the Immigration Detention Network, and the existing accommodation within Hawk Compound approaching the end of their natural asset life. The current accommodation facilities are not fit for purpose against the current needs of the IDN.
3. The scope of works comprises:
 - a. Demolition and removal of all existing buildings and associated infrastructure within the Hawk Compound;
 - b. Retention of the existing perimeter security fence;
 - c. Construction of new accommodation for 47 detainees with one accessible room, servery, laundry, recreation area and associated infrastructure on the western half of the Hawk Compound, with the eastern half cleared for future use;
 - d. Provision of all required physical security controls such as fencing, access control and comprehensive CCTV coverage in common areas.
4. This project will enhance operational management flexibility and significantly reduce operational risks by providing safe and secure accommodation for high and extreme risk detainees. It will also provide a safe and welcoming environment for staff, contractors and visitors to the facility.
5. The project will be delivered within YHIDC on a brownfield site, with no known environmental or heritage issues. The project has undertaken community consultation and there are no anticipated negative material impacts on the local community.
6. The estimated total capital out-turned cost is \$34,944,547 (excluding GST), which has been agreed between the Department of Finance and the Department of Home Affairs. Construction will be delivered under a Design and Construct (D&C) contract model and utilise modular construction. Construction works are anticipated to be completed by December 2026.
7. This project will deliver public value through enhancement of Australia's Immigration Detention Network capability, improving safety and security for detainees, staff and contractors at YHIDC and delivering improved sustainability of facilities associated with a more modern and efficient building design and engineering systems.

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Project Title

8. The title of the project is Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre (YHIDC) Hawk Compound Redevelopment Project.

Department of Home Affairs

9. The Department of Home Affairs was created as part of the Home Affairs Portfolio on 20 December 2017. The Department is responsible for immigration and customs border policy, national security and law enforcement policy, emergency management, including crisis management and disaster recovery, counter terrorism policy and coordination, cyber security policy and coordination, countering foreign interference, critical infrastructure protection, multicultural affairs, countering violent extremism programs, and transport security.

Purpose of Works

10. The purpose of the project is to redevelop the Hawk Compound within YHIDC to meet the capability needs of the Immigration Detention Network, address safety and security risks associated with the existing facilities and meet modern National Construction Code building compliance.
11. YHIDC has been operational since 27 June 2012 and was originally designed for low to medium-risk detainees. Between June 2012 and June 2025, both the proportion of high to extreme risk detainees and the average duration of stay have increased. As of June 2025, approximately 56% of detainees within the Immigration Detention Network were assessed as high or extreme risk, up from 32% in 2015. Approximately 93% of current detainees at YHIDC have a criminal history.
12. The existing Hawk Compound accommodation was constructed using temporary facilities. These facilities have not undergone modifications since establishment and are approaching the end of their natural asset life. Their current layout is also not suitable for housing high to extreme risk detainees.
13. The change in detainee risk profile and nature of existing facilities has resulted in the current accommodation at YHIDC Hawk Compound no longer being fit for purpose. It presents safety and security risks to detainees, staff and contractors, such as difficulty in managing large groups of detainees, limited entry and exit points, CCTV camera blind spots and climbing and ligature points.
14. By redeveloping the Hawk Compound the project will:
 - a. Provide fit-for-purpose accommodation for detainees that meets modern building code compliance and all required physical security standards;
 - b. Meet business and operational requirement of the Australian Border Force;
 - c. Demonstrate value for money; and
 - d. Comply with the Commonwealth Property Management Framework.

Options Considered

15. The Department developed the following four options:
 - a. **Option one – Do nothing.** This option involves no investment in the redevelopment of the existing Hawk Compound.
 - b. **Option two - Minimum Viable Capability (MVC) scope option.** This option comprises the demolition of the existing Hawk Compound area and the construction of one new compound.

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This new compound will provide accommodation, communal facilities, and necessary infrastructure, with a capacity to house 47 detainees, including one accessible room.

- c. **Option three – Full Hawk Compound Redevelopment scope option.** This option comprises the demolition of the existing Hawk Compound area and the construction of two new compounds. These new compounds will provide accommodation, communal facilities, and infrastructure, with a capacity to house 92 detainees, including four accessible rooms.
 - d. **Option four – Full Hawk and Adjacent Falcon Compound Redevelopment scope option.** This option comprises the demolition of the existing Hawk Compound and the adjacent Falcon Compound, followed by the construction of four new compounds. The new compounds will provide accommodation, communal facilities, and infrastructure, with a capacity to house 188 detainees, including four accessible rooms.
16. **Approved option.** The option that was approved by Government is Option Two. Option Two mitigates critical safety and security risks. It aligns with the operational needs of the Australian Border Force and meets minimum capability requirements.

Scope of Works

Site Description

- 17. YHIDC is located approximately 90km north-east of Perth Central Business District and 5km from the town centre of Northam, Western Australia. YHIDC comprises of six compounds, with four (Eagle, Swan, Falcon and Hawk) providing long-term detainee accommodation.
- 18. The Shire of Northam is situated within the Avon sub-region of the Western Australian Wheatbelt and is home to 11,934 people (ABS 2022), with approximately 60% residing in Northam. Northam is home to multiple public facilities, including a library, hospital, senior citizens' centre, recreation centre, three major sporting grounds and an Olympic swimming pool. Northam has a Senior High School, the Central Regional TAFE, Muresk Institute of Agriculture (a division of Curtin University), two Primary Schools and St Joseph's School, which provides education to Year 10. Northam also serves as a key hub for significant rail and road connections to eastern Australia.

Long-Term Use

- 19. The long-term use of YHIDC is to accommodate detainees as part of Australia's Immigration Detention Network capability.

Scope Summary

- 20. The scope of works was developed through consultation with representatives from the Department of Home Affairs, the Australian Border Force and other relevant stakeholders.
- 21. The scope of works includes the following:
 - a. Demolition and removal of all existing buildings and associated infrastructure within the Hawk Compound;
 - b. Retention of the existing perimeter security fence;
 - c. Construction of a new single storey modular accommodation facility, comprising 24 rooms and designed to accommodate up to 47 detainees, including one accessible room. Rooms will be double occupancy and each will be equipped with ensuite facilities including a toilet, basin, and shower;

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- d. Construction of auxiliary facilities including servery, laundry, information technology room, multi-faith and prayer room, recreation area, officers' station and associated infrastructure on the western half of the Hawk Compound, with the eastern half cleared for future use;
 - e. Provision of accessible ramps with covered pathways and stairs to connect facilities and compounds; and
 - f. Provision of all required physical security controls such as fencing, access control and comprehensive CCTV coverage in common areas.
22. The new security controls will enable officers to control movements to and from the Hawk Compound to other YHIDC facilities including for visits, property, medical, interview rooms, programs, and activities. They will also allow for different scenarios such as free movement during recreational time to restricted movement during lockdowns.
23. The scope of works has been developed to the Concept Design stage.

Concept Design

24. The design solution for this project prioritises adaptability and the maximisation of space utilisation for both detainees and staff, all within the constraints of the available funding. This design encompasses the demolition and clearance of the Hawk compound, the replacement of the compound building with modular construction, and modification of existing Road 12 to provide food delivery services to the Servery, a new perimeter road to the north of compound for staff and emergency vehicles. The cleared site will have space reserved for potential future expansion. During construction, existing fence lines will be maintained to ensure the security of the compound, while areas outside the construction zone will remain under the control of Facility Management. The new construction zone is indicated in dark green in Figure 1.

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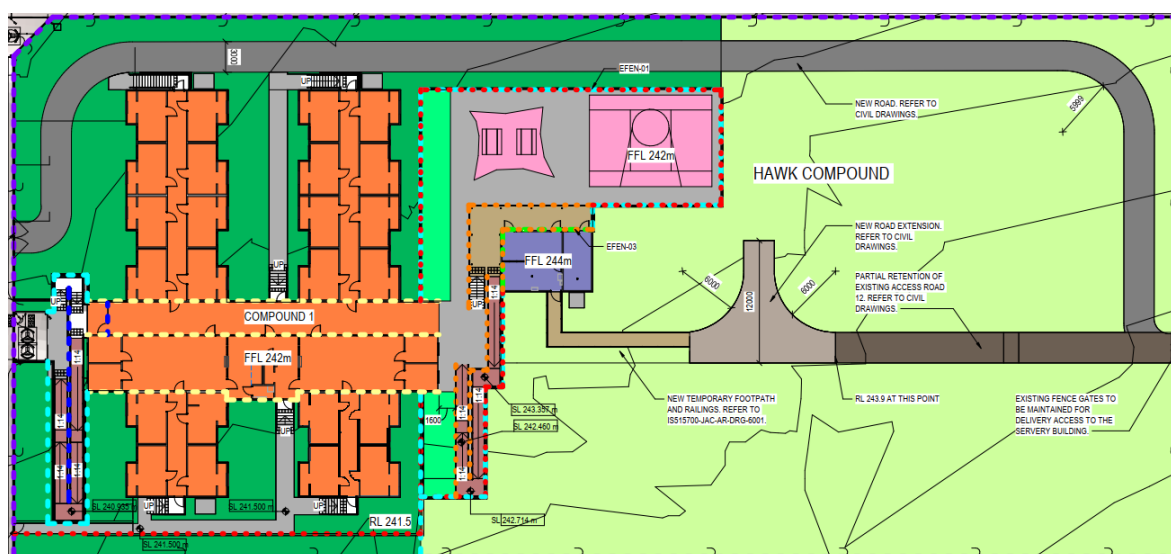


Figure 1 - YHIDC Hawk Compound Concept Design Site Plan

25. The proposed layout of the compound includes a single access point for detainees to enter each accommodation and communal building, while a separate sterile zone for officers will facilitate their entry and exit, including the officer's post. This site planning allows detainees to access the Servery to receive meals which can be taken to the Communal room for consuming within the detainees secured zone. A separate sterile access route to the servery for staff is provided.
26. Services, such as electrical, communication, water, and fire connection, will be reticulated underground from an existing source to the proposed site, and any surface areas affected by the construction will be restored as part of the project. Stakeholders from YHIDC and the Department have been consulted regarding the final siting and location of the facilities, with final arrangements to be documented during the detailed design phase.

Security

27. The security measures aim to provide the capability to manage higher-risk detainees effectively. These measures comprise architectural treatments, controlled access zones, intrusion and duress alarm monitoring, CCTV surveillance, and other electronic systems. These security measures facilitate the efficient and effective monitoring and control of activity and access within the compound, without impeding authorised movement.

Structural

28. The facilities will be constructed in accordance with the National Construction Code and modular facilities manufacturer specifications.

Mechanical Services

29. The mechanical systems will consist of direct expansion wall-mounted split systems, incorporating fresh air provisions directed into the space and exhaust provisions for amenities. The proposed design for the new compounds will consider the weather conditions of Northam, Western Australia, based on the Northam AIRAH DA09 data. The mechanical system will be controlled through a local wall-mounted controller.

Electrical Services

30. The power to the Hawk and Falcon compounds is supplied from Substation 2, which has a capacity of 630kVA, with a 30kVA standby generator for essential services and an uninterruptible power

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supply (UPS) for critical services, including perimeter fence security and lighting. The main switchboard and UPS are located within the Plant Shed adjacent to Substation 2. The preliminary assessments suggest that the current power supply will be sufficient for the new redevelopment, which will be confirmed during the detailed design phase.

Fire Protection

31. The fire protection services will conform to the National Construction Code and all relevant standards including, but not limited to, AS2118.1, AS2441-2005 and AS2444-2001.

Acoustics

32. The acoustic performance has been documented to match the purpose and security rating of each component of the accommodation and takes into consideration noise transfer within the officer's station, general corridor walls, prayer rooms and bedrooms. The exact acoustic treatments will be confirmed during the Detailed Design phase.

Geotechnical

33. The project conducted geological and hydrological testing at YHIDC as part of the design development process. This testing has provided factual data about the surface and subsurface conditions.

Landscaping

34. The proposed works will require site clearance and demolition of existing structures and the installation of new landscaping elements. The scope of external works will align with the existing facility standards, incorporating landscaped grass areas and paved surfaces within both sterile and communal zones. The detailed landscaping requirements will be further documented within the detailed design phase to ensure adherence to specific landscaping requirements for detention centres to meet well-being, environmental and safety standards.

Sustainability

35. Further to National Construction Code Section J compliance, the ESD Strategy Report provides recommendations on matters including efficient and effective use of natural resources, water and energy conservation, sustainable materials, indoor environmental quality for occupants, waste management and alignment with the Net Zero Government policy. These recommendations will be incorporated into the Detailed Design.

Access Provisions

36. The YHIDC Hawk project works will be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 and the Disability Access to Premises (Buildings) Standard 2010. This will be met through providing accessibility to one bedroom and all communal areas, including Prayer Room, Multi-Purpose / Faith Room, Communal Room, Officer Post, Walkways, Laundry and Outdoor Recreational Area.

Work Health and Safety

37. The project will comply with the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011 (Cth), Work Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment – National Standards) Regulations, and relevant Home Affairs policies.
38. In accordance with the Federal Safety Commissioner Act 2020 (Cth), building contractors will be required to hold full occupational health and safety accreditation from the Office of the Federal

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Safety Commissioner under the Australian Government Building and Construction Occupational Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme.

39. The construction site will be within a restricted area and will be appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access during the construction period. Outside of the construction site project personnel will comply with YHIDC's safety and security protocols. Consideration has also been made in the design for safety and security.

Environment and Heritage

40. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this project as the proposed development will be undertaken on an existing brownfield site within the current detention compound. The site is already utilised for detainee accommodation and lacks any significant ecological or environmental attributes that would necessitate an EIA.
41. The site contains no known environmental issues and no known natural, Indigenous, or historic heritage items. Prior to commencing construction activities, the construction contractor will plan and implement mitigation measures to minimise any potential impact the project may have on the environment.

Other Issues

Key legislation

42. Works will be compliant with the National Construction Code 2022 and all other applicable legislation and Australian Standards. This includes but is not limited to the following:
- a. Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth);
 - b. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);
 - c. Fair Work (Building Industry) Act 2012 (Cth);
 - d. Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth); and
 - e. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

Anticipated Impacts on the Local Community

43. The project's anticipated impact on the local community is as follows:
- a. **Local Economic Impact:** The project is anticipated to have a positive short-term economic impact on the local community during construction by increasing employment opportunities in the region and stimulating local business activity.
 - b. **Visual Impacts.** There are no anticipated material visual impacts to local communities, as the proposed facilities at both establishments are a significant distance from the closest residential and commercial developments.
 - c. **Noise Impacts.** There are no anticipated material noise impacts to local communities or existing nearby detention centre facilities.
 - d. **Traffic, Transportation and Road Impacts.** There are no anticipated material impacts on local traffic from the construction or operation of the proposed facilities. Temporary facilities required during construction will be established within YHIDC and managed in consultation with the Facilities Management provider and the Department.

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- e. **Relevant Local Facilities.** There are no anticipated material impacts on the demand for, or use of local facilities. The use of modular construction requires off-site prefabrication which will reduce the overall construction duration on site.
44. The new facilities delivered by the project are not expected to generate long-term impact on the local community, as they will reside entirely within Commonwealth-owned land and will not generate an increase in the overall detainees or staffing numbers.

Community Consultation

45. The Department has consulted with the local community through written correspondence to:
- a. Federal, State and Local government Members; and
 - b. The Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation.
46. Details of the consultation will be captured in the Community Consultation Report.

Cost Effectiveness and Public Value

Forecasted Project Cost

47. The estimated total capital out-turned cost is \$34,944,547 (excluding GST), which has been agreed between the Department of Finance and the Department of Home Affairs. This encompasses all capital construction works, including design, project management, consultancy costs and construction contingencies in the Planning and Delivery Phase. Non-construction related costs such as non-construction contingencies are excluded.

Project Delivery Method

48. The Department has engaged a Project Manager /Contract Administrator (PM/CA) for the development of the works for the YHIDC Hawk Compound redevelopment facilities in Northam. The PM/CA is responsible for project management of all phases, delivery of the Concept Design and contract administration of the construction contract on behalf of the Commonwealth.
49. The Department will implement a single-stage procurement Tender process. This process will involve issuing a limited Request for Quote to a panel of service providers. The objective is to select a suitable D&C Head Contractor while ensuring full compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs).
50. The D&C Head Contractor will complete the Detailed Design, procure trades and manage all construction activities. The D&C contract model will allow the Head Contractor to engage with modular building fabricators during detailed design development. This will yield efficiencies in fabrication and delivery, while still allowing the Department to retain control of the design and not compromise on quality.

Project Program

51. The planned key project milestone dates are as follows:
- a. December 2025 - Design and Construct contract awarded.
 - b. April 2026 - Detailed Design Completion.
 - c. May 2026 – Construction Commencement.
 - d. December 2026 - Construction Completion.

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Public Value

52. The public value associated with this project includes:

- a. Enhancement of Australia's Immigration Detention Network capability through enabling YHIDC to manage increased numbers of high and extreme risk detainees that is reflective of the current and future anticipated cohort;
- b. Improved safety and security to detainees, staff and contractors at YHIDC; and
- c. Improved sustainability of facilities associated with a more modern and efficient building design and engineering systems.